

RELATIONS BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF Dr. MOHAMMAD YUSUF

Dormohammad Ebrahimi

Professor of Parwan University

Mohammad Arif Sharifi

Assistant professor of Parwan University

ABSTRACT

Afghanistan and Pakistan are a few neighboring countries whose diplomatic relations have been based on political tensions from the beginning and their ruling regimes have always fueled these tensions by adopting aggressive strategies. These two neighboring countries have the highest level of social and cultural commonality, and tribal and racial ties. An important issue that has affected the relations between both countries and has caused the continuation of political tensions is one of the territorial claims and Pashtunistan of the Afghan rulers and the other is the defensive strategy of the Pakistani government based on covert and open interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. The tensest period in the foreign policy of both countries was during the presidency of Mohammad Dawood, whose stance in supporting the Pashtuns on the other side of the Durand Line caused the severance of political relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. After the resignation of Mohammad Dawood and the coming to power of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan have resumed, and the purpose of this research is to describe and analyze Afghanistan's foreign relations with Pakistan during the presidency of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf Khan. After a round of hostile relations, how did Afghanistan and Pakistan resume diplomatic relations, and based on which political mechanisms? It is the most important question that this research has answered by using documents, books, and scientific articles in an analytical-descriptive way. The result of the research shows that during the presidency of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf Khan, the Afghan government avoided taking tense positions in foreign relations with Pakistan and considering the expediency and understanding of the importance of the sense of neighborliness in diplomatic relations, it wanted to end the claim of Pashtunistan to consolidate national interests and It has

been to prevent the political sovereignty in the country from being endangered.

Keywords: Afghanistan, Pakistan, foreign relations, and the chancellery of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf.

INTRODUCTION

Geographical factors, especially the neighborhood and common border issues, are important elements that play an important role in the relations of countries, and without considering them, tension in the politics and foreign relations of countries, and internal issues such as securing their national security and interests is impossible. Recognizing the ability and vulnerability of countries depends on their geographical and geopolitical conditions; But as a general principle throughout the world, neighbors have a unique and special role in each other's strategic policies (Ataayat, 2014: 2). The purpose of bilateral relations is to establish political, economic or cultural relations between two independent countries. When governments are recognized as independent countries, they actually announce their foreign policy towards each other by establishing diplomatic relations and opening embassies. But since the establishment of Pakistan, Afghanistan's relationship with that country has not been a relationship based on a sense of neighborliness and reconciliation. From the beginning of the formation of the government of Pakistan, Afghanistan has always been one of the governments that has even questioned the territorial integrity of Pakistan by adopting contradictory policies towards Pakistan. Pakistan, which itself was created as a result of colonial efforts, has border problems with Afghanistan, which has made friendly relations between the two countries difficult. However, Pakistan's elites have always praised Afghanistan as a center of civil gravity, a model of religion and culture (Mohammadi, 2014: 1).

In order to take advantage of the gap between the strong British presence in the region and the weakness of the newly established country of Pakistan, the Afghan government called the border dispute left over from the colonial era as invalid and raised the imposition of the Durand Line and demanded negotiations with Pakistan in order to determine new border boundaries for the sake of aligning the tribes. Pashtuns are divided on both sides of the Durand border. However, the desire of Pakistan's Pashtun tribal chiefs to remain in the territory of that country and their lack of interest in joining Afghanistan has put Afghanistan in a losing position in this fight and Pakistan in a superior or winning position in the territorial and border dispute

with Afghanistan. The explicit rejection of Afghanistan's request and Pakistan's emphasis on the international recognition of the Durand border line is the main reason for the tension between the two countries (Ibrahimkhani, 2019: 2).

Foreign relations of Afghanistan and Pakistan during the presidency of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf

Dr. Mohammad Yusuf was born in Kabul city in 1917. He obtained his doctorate in physics from Germany and taught for a while as a professor at Kabul University. In 1949, he served as the deputy minister of education and on March 10 of the same year as the minister of mines. After the resignation of Mohammad Dawood Khan from the post of Prime Minister, he was appointed as the Deputy Minister of Afghanistan and announced his cabinet on March 13, 1963. He was the first chancellor of Afghanistan during the reign of Mohammad Zahir Shah who was not from the royal family. The most important event of his presidency is the acceleration of the democracy process and the ratification of the new constitution in Afghanistan, which came into effect on October 1, 1963. The constitution that greatly contributed to the development of democracy and the freedom of political activity of parties. The constitution of his period was one of the most comprehensive and modern constitutions in the region, which enshrined individual rights and freedoms, freedom to practice religious rituals, freedom to form parties and assemblies, and torture, exile, censorship and persecution of political opponents were prohibited. Dr. Yusuf resigned from the post of president on October 29, 1965 and passed away in Germany on January 23, 1998.

In the foreign policy of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, the first Prime Minister of the Decade of the Constitution (the Decade of Democracy), strengthening friendly relations with neighboring countries and Islamic countries, respecting the United Nations Charter and seeking the assistance of international organizations were the basic program of the reform programs of the government in Afghanistan (Panjshiri, 2019: 122). Pakistan is a country in the subcontinent region that has only been established for more than half a century. But in its short history, it has also caused major crises in the region (Hosseinkhani, 1391: 117).

The darkness of relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan started when after the declaration of independence of that country in 1947, Afghanistan did not recognize its independence in the United Nations and voted against it (Watkins, 2021: 2). Pakistan has deep religious, cultural, historical, linguistic and geographical ties with Afghanistan. As a landlocked country, with about 2200 kilometers of common



border with Pakistan, Afghanistan is also considered the gateway of Pakistan to Central Asia. The main goals of Pakistan's foreign policy in relation to Afghanistan are the pursuit of geostrategic interests, security issues, economic interactions, and most importantly, maintaining the balance of influence of other regional powers in Afghanistan. Afghanistan's tendency towards India and other countries in the region is one of Pakistan's major concerns (Mohammed Alipour, 2019: 270-271). With the resignation of Mohammad Davoud Khan in March 1963, the deterioration of relations between the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan slowly improved, and with the establishment of the constitutional government led by Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, the most tense period in the political relations between the two countries ended (Zamani, 2014). : 129). The government of Afghanistan during the presidency of Dr. Yusuf. A milder policy towards Pakistan was adopted and an effort was made to return the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan to a normal state. The turmoil in Pashtunistan subsided after the resignation of Mohammad Dawood khan from the prime ministership, for whatever reason. Pakistan and Afghanistan once again achieved normal relations (Javadi, 2019: 110). Dr. Mohammad Yusuf announced his government's policy on March 28, 1963 after becoming the chancellor, and regarding Afghanistan's foreign policy, it was stated that the Afghan government adopted a foreign policy based on non-alignment with Pakistan and sought the government's position on economic relations and the issue of Pashtunistan. He will resolve the past with bilateral diplomacy. From the content of this speech, it is clear that the Afghan government has tried to resolve the tension with Pakistan and followed the middle way in foreign policy (Rahmand, 2012: 72).

The role of the Shah of Iran in reducing the tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan

During the presidency of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, the Iranian government made extensive efforts to improve the relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, so that it could play the role of a mediator and help normalize the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. On 25th of the year 1341 Khurshidi corresponding to 1962 AD, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Aram wrote a letter to Afghanistan's Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Yousef asking him to inform the Iranian Foreign Minister about his views on reconciliation with Pakistan. Mr. Zulfiqari, Iran's ambassador in Kabul, gave this letter to Dr. Mohammad Yousuf and asked him to deal with



Pakistan more carefully than his predecessor. Iran's efforts forced both sides to start dialogue and accept Iran's mediation to resolve the differences. At the end of May 1962, the mediation of the Shah of Iran was accepted by Afghanistan (Javadi, 2019: 110). With the acceptance of the Shah of Iran's mediation proposal by Pakistan and Afghanistan and his visit to Kabul and Rawalpindi in 1962, contacts between the officials of the two countries began in order to reduce tension (Ibrahimkhani, 2019: 4). In March 1963, to resolve the tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan, delegations from Pakistan and Afghanistan held a meeting in Tehran to resolve the issue. These negotiations were held under the supervision of the Shah of Iran, and finally the parties agreed to re-establish political relations between their countries and to restore the Afghanistan transit route. Despite that, the dispute remained over the issue of Pashtunistan, but both sides pledged that the said issue would not spoil their relations in other cases (Rahmand, 2012: 73). After meeting and negotiating in Tehran, the Afghan and Pakistani delegations reached a final agreement regarding the resumption of political relations and the reopening of common borders (Ibrahimkhani, 2019: 5). Both governments also agreed to solve all their issues according to international laws and make a lasting effort to strengthen the atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect. This position was a reference to the wish that Afghanistan take the path of moderation in the issue of Pashtunistan (Frayad Afghan, 2008: 290). The mediation of Mohammad Reza, the king of Iran, had started at the height of tension and breaking of relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Although at the beginning, Pakistan agreed to accept Iran's mediation, but it hesitated to reopen the Afghan embassies in Pakistan, and General Mohammad Ayub Khan, the military ruler of Pakistan, called Afghan political embassies dens of espionage and provocative activities against Pakistan. The Afghan delegation in the negotiation consisted of Seyyed Qasim Rashtiya, Minister of Press (Information and Culture), Noor Mohammad Etimadi, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mohammad Osman Amir, Afghanistan's ambassador to Iran. The Pakistani delegation included Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, General Political Director Shafqat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Pakistani Ambassador to Iran Akhtar Hussain. After several days of discussion and understanding, the negotiating team signed the agreement on the restoration of diplomatic relations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran on May 27, 1963 (Andishmand, 2011: 252-253).

Dr. Mohammad Yusuf's policy towards Pakistan after the normalization of relations between the two countries



With the change in the situation in Pakistan, the relations between the two countries entered a new era. When General Mohammad Ayub Khan took power in Pakistan with the first military coup against Iskandar Mirza in 1958, the men of Afghanistan were shocked because all the leaders of the new Pakistani government were Pashtuns. In this way, Afghanistan no longer had an excuse to violate the rights of the Pashtuns and had to adopt a new method regarding the Pashtunistan issue. On the other hand, Ayub Khan had adopted a policy against Iskandar Mirza and refrained from any flexibility in the Pashtunistan issue. (Javadi, 2019: 110).

The main concern of Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral relations is Afghanistan's friendly relationship with India and Afghanistan's territorial claims to Pashtun areas on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line, which have become less practical in recent years, but many governments based in Kabul use the Pashtun issue as a policy lever. Internally, they use domestically to gain more acceptance. The general goals of Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan are, to put it simply, to moderate and counter India's influence in Afghanistan and to force Afghanistan to give up its territorial and border claims to Pakistan (Mohammad Alipour, 2019: 271). The negotiations between the two countries, which were held in Tehran in May 1963, greatly helped to improve the relations between the two countries. The delegations of the two countries agreed to ban hostile propaganda about the Pashtunistan issue from their mass media, to reopen embassies, consulates and commercial agencies as before. Both countries agreed that the Durand-Pashtunistan border issue should be kept separate from other issues related to the political, economic and commercial relations of the two countries (Javadi, 1399: 111). After the restoration of political and commercial relations between the two countries, the government of Pakistan showed flexibility with Pashtun opposition leaders. At the time of the second war between Pakistan and India in September 1965 over Kashmir, the Afghan government refused to take any action against Pakistan despite the views of using this opportunity about Pashtunistan that existed inside the government and outside it (Andishmand, 2011: 253). In October 1964, Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, the Prime Minister of Afghanistan, participated in the conference of non-aligned countries in Cairo and spoke about the improvement of relations with Pakistan in that conference (Rahmand, 2012: 74). At the same time, the king of Afghanistan decided that there will be no more pressure on the Pashtunistan issue in the country's press. He wanted to continue the demand for the right of self-



determination for the people of the border tribes, but on top of that the secrets and insistence to the extent that it harms the national interests of Afghanistan, it is not necessary to cause tension with Pakistan. After the improvement of relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan in 1964, General Mohammad Ayub Khan, the President of Pakistan, stopped in Kabul for a while, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan also visited Kabul during his trip to Moscow (Zamani, 2014: 129-130). At the time of the second war between Pakistan and India, there were heated discussions among government ministers about the use of this war in the issue of Pashtunistan, but the Shah refused to accept the opinion of supporters of action against Pakistan during the war. Seyyed Qasim Rashtiya, Minister of Finance, speaks in detail about the discussions on this issue. He talks about his dialogue with Dr. Abdul Qayyum, the Minister of Interior, who was one of the supporters of urgent action regarding the issue of Pashtunistan during the Indo-Pakistan war. While the Minister of Finance considers the political and military conditions of Afghanistan unfavorable with such an action. He writes: The extraordinary meeting started with a brief report of the events as far as it was obtained through diplomatic and newspapers by the chancellor (Dr. Mohammad Yusuf) who was also responsible for the foreign ministry and some members of the parliament expressed their views. A group headed by Dr. Abdul Qayyum, Minister of Interior, Gol Pacha Elfat, Chief of Tribes, and Mohammad Azim, Minister of Public Works, all three of whom were from the Eastern and Pashtun side, separately suggested that Afghanistan use this golden opportunity to unilateralize the issue of Pashtunistan and claimed that with a The strong demonstration of Pakistan will be ready to give the rights of Pashtun and Baloch people. Dr. Abdul Qayyum, the spokesperson of this group, also pointed out that if no action is taken at this time, the generals will take advantage of the government's inaction and attract public opinion to their side, and he insisted that not only Pakistan, which serious response to the crisis in They will not be able to show themselves by war with India, but the international environment is also favorable for such a move and the Soviets will definitely support Afghanistan's action both directly and at the international level. They did not know Pakistan in such conditions for the benefit of Afghanistan and the region and prevented any movement against Pakistan (Andishmand, 2011: 254-252).

CONCLUSION

Pakistan has deep religious, cultural, historical, linguistic and geographical ties with Afghanistan. As a land-locked



country, with about 2,200 kilometers of common border with Pakistan, Afghanistan is also considered the gateway of Pakistan to Central Asia. The relations between the two neighboring and Muslim countries were in the darkest period and even completely severed during the presidency of Mohammad Dawood Khan. With the resignation of Mohammad Dawood Khan and the appointment of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf in this position, relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan slowly improved. And Dr. Mohammad Yusuf welcomed the offer of mediation by Mohammad Reza, the King of Iran, for good relations with Pakistan. For this purpose, he sent a delegation headed by the Minister of Information and Culture, Seyyed Qasim Rashtia, to Tehran. On behalf of Pakistan, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, represented the delegation of that country. After several days of negotiation and understanding, the delegations of the two sides decided to resume the embassies, consulates, commercial and trade missions between the two countries, to keep the issue of Durand and Pashtunistan away from other issues and not cause a slowdown in the relations between the two countries. Dr. Mohammad Yusuf and Mohammad Zahir Shah, the king of Afghanistan, adopted a softer policy towards Pakistan during the decade of democracy, and even during the second Indo-Pakistan war, when a golden opportunity was provided for Afghanistan to gain access to Pashtunistan and Baluchistan regions, and this discussion He had supporters in the cabinet, but the king and the chancellor disagreed and did not want to involve themselves in territorial and border issues with Pakistan. In general, during the term of Dr. Mohammad Yusuf's chancellorship, relations between the two countries improved significantly, and both sides tried to ensure that issues such as Pashtunistan and the Durand border line did not cast a shadow on the politics and relations of the two countries, and that trade and commerce between the two countries continued normally. Active diplomacy between the two countries should be institutionalized based on the national interests of both sides.

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