**Elected Joe Biden: Implications for Pakistan**

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A change in the White House is always supplemented by a shift in international policy of every respective country. As in the words of Noam Chomsky, every President of the United States (US) has a new doctrine that has a profound influence on overall geopolitics.

Joe Biden, after a tough electoral match with Donald Trump have won the US Presidential election 2020. Now, it is important to understand how the outcome of the US presidential elections can pave the way for a change in US-Pak relations and Pakistan’s relationship with its South Asian neighbors. Will the immigrants related issues get resolved? Will there be significant improvement in policies to curb the rising unemployment? Will Biden policies implant another Osama Bin Laden character in South Asian region? Will Biden follow Barack Obama policies for increased air strikes, drone attacks and bombing on the name of war on terror?  The historical study of the roles of Biden and President Donald Trump against Pakistan is crucial and requires in-depth analysis.

Pakistan is commonly said to be pleased to know that Biden is on track to reach the oath as the new US president. Biden is an old diplomat and has had an amicable relationship with Pakistan, which is why he is voting for Pakistan. Freshly, elected US President Mr. Joe Biden has completed a tough road to the political pinnacle, which included two previous unsuccessful presidential bids by beating President Donald Trump, a constant in US politics for half a century as a senator and vice president.

He is most interested by his views on Pakistan. Biden has traditionally regarded Pakistan as a strategic regional partner, unlike Trump’s cynicism about Pakistan ‘s role in the US war on terror. Biden, along with Senator Richard Lugar, enacted the 2008 Enhanced Partnership Act with Pakistan during his tenure as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (SFRC). In 2008, Pakistan bestowed the second highest civilian award on Biden,’ Hilal-e-Pakistan.’ The plan to carry $1.5 billion in non-military assistance to Pakistan was supported by Joe Biden and Senator Richard Lugar. A ‘Hilal-e-Pakistan’ was also awarded to Lugar. Pakistani experts assert that Biden would bring back the old age of diplomacy between the two countries as president. After Senator Kerry became SFRC Chairman, their efforts to improve the US-Pakistan relationship later resulted in the famous Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act of 2009. The main objective of Biden’s efforts was to strengthen Pakistan’s political and economic situation for regional peace. Biden opposed the operation carried out by US forces on Pakistani territories in 2011, when American forces killed the world’s most wanted terrorist, Osama Bin Laden, in Pakistan.

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Similarly, in the light of the Afghan crisis, Biden also sees Pakistan as a reliable and conscientious alliance. In the book, The Fight for Pakistan, Shuja Nawaz recalls that during Biden visit to Kabul as US vice president, Biden made a ‘shut-up call’ to Hamid Karzai when the latter called for the US to diplomatically pressurize Pakistan to curtail its support for the Afghan Taliban. Biden opposed this by arguing that “Pakistan is fifty times more important to the US than Afghanistan.” However, according to experts, the likely choice the Biden administration will select is a trilateral dialogue under US supervision, a quasi-autonomous structure that Islamabad often finds unfavorable.

In addition, a shift in the White House may also alter the relationship between Pakistan and its aggressive eastern neighbor. Under the Trump administration, India has enjoyed diplomatic influence. Since the last Indian election, his divisive rhetoric against Pakistan and the unilateral annulment of Article 370, revoking Kashmir ‘s unique autonomy, have been pretty much unheard in Washington.

To constitute the rising Chinese influence, the Trump administration actively endorsed Prime Minister Narendra Modi ‘s ambitions, culminating in a $3 billion arms deal earlier this year between the two countries. Such a diplomatic courtship between the US and India has not only marginalised Pakistan but also raised a red flag in Beijing, resulting in multiple pitched battles and diplomatic scuffles between the three nuclear-armed neighbours in South Asia. It is unlikely that the diplomatic relations between Washington and New Delhi will dramatically change since India’s economic power in South Asia makes it the only powerful opponent against Chinese expansionism.

Nevertheless, through dialogue, the Biden administration would probably strive to enhance Indo-Pak relations, something he explicitly endorsed as a US senator during the Vajpayee-Musharraf talks. In addition, as suggested by Kamala Harris, who also made history on Saturday with her election as Joe Biden’s vice president, the US may diplomatically urge India to curb its human rights violations in Kashmir, becoming the first woman, first Black American and first Asian American to win the second highest US office.

In conclusion, the Trumpian ideology will finally come to an end by Biden wining the November elections. The shift could be what the people in the red-zone admire, but cannot express it openly. Nonetheless, the historical stance of Biden and his views on Pakistan signify that the diplomatic exchange between Washington and Islamabad will prosper under him, and that the US could continue its civil-military assistance to Pakistan, which was stopped under the administration of Trump. However, due to the strained US-China relationship, the new administration might compel Pakistan to move away from the influence of Beijing. Therefore, maintaining a balance between the two powers is a task that Pakistan’s foreign policy specialists should be primed to do.

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