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Editorial

Dear Readers,

The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services continues its renewed zeal to offer quality -oriented legislative, research, capacity building and outreach services to the Members of Parliament and parliamentary committees to the National Parliament as well as provincial legislatures. It recently held a national conference for Members of Public Accounts Committees from all Houses, which saw keen participation of MPs and experts.

This Issue of the PIPS Parliamentary Research Digest includes a theoretical parliamentary article of Post Legislative Scrutiny that introduces MPs and committee to a contemporary tradition where Parliament oversees and conducts impact assessment of existing laws to see if they delivered their targeted goal. In addition, absorbing articles on two developments in foreign affairs are also part of the Digest, i.e. UAE's newly found relations for Israel and yet another round of Afghan Peace Agreement, especially in the wake of President Trump's ambitious preparation of winning local support in November 2020 Presidential Race.

We take the opportunity to thank the Members of Parliament from all Houses for their immense recognition and appreciation for continued research and legislative services by Team PIPS in the challenging weeks under lockdown.

Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka
Senior Director General (Research and Legislation)



Honorable Mr. Asad Qaiser, Speaker, National Assembly of Pakistan addressing the participants of Seminar on International Democracy Day at PIPS on September 15, 2020

FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS

Income and Expenses of FBISE (2014-2019)

Qaiser Iqbal, Librarian &
Areeb Shirazi, Young Parliamentary Officer,
Information Centre, PIPS

On January 31, 2020, during the 2nd Parliamentary Year, 19th session of the National Assembly, Honorable Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training presented the comparative analysis of Income and Expenditure of Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education for the past 5 years 2014 – 2019.

A. Income of Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education during the last 5 years (2014- 2019)

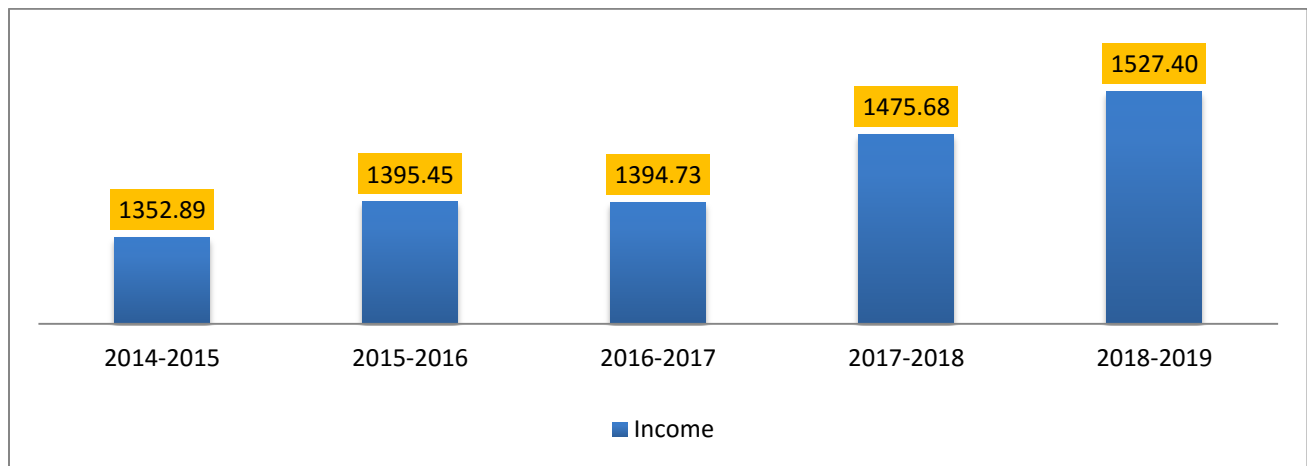


Figure 1 Income of FBISE during the last five years

A. Expenditure of Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education during the last 5 years (2014-2019)

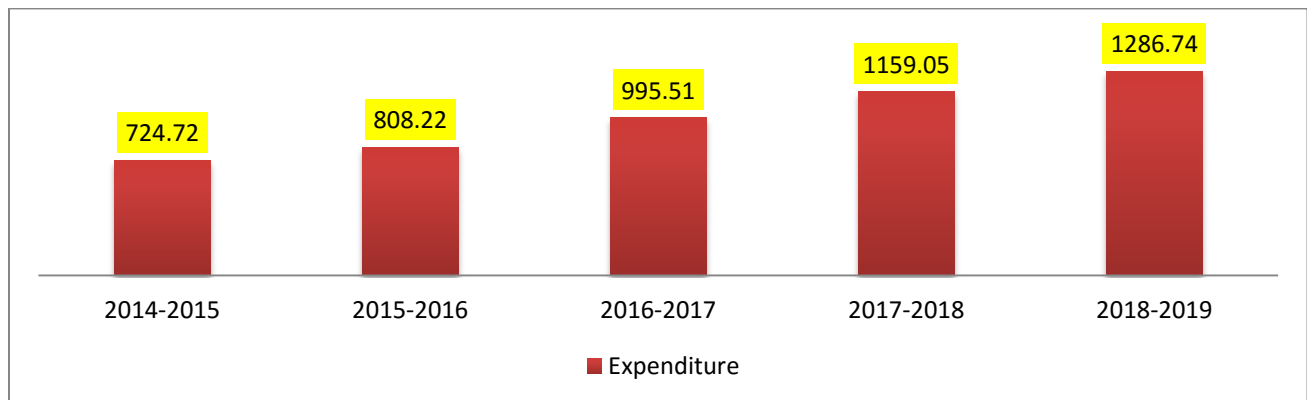


Figure 2 Expenses of FBISE during the last five years

CONCEPT**Post Legislative Scrutiny - Practices and Challenges**

Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka, Senior DG (Research and Legislation), PIPS
and **Hanif Khan**, Consultant (Research and Legislation), PIPS

1. Introduction

Parliaments perform the arduous tasks of law making, representation, oversight and review of public policies, expenses, administration and every aspect of executive jurisdiction. Being a country's prestigious seat of chosen representatives of the people, the Parliament's role to evaluate if the laws it has passed effectively achieve their intended outcome(s), is imperative. In many developed parliamentary democracies, a contemporary tradition of undertaking **Post-Legislative Scrutiny of existing laws**, primarily refers to application of parliament's mandate to a particular question: whether the laws of a country are producing expected outcomes? and if not, why?

In this paper we explored the concept of Post legislative Scrutiny and provide a brief comparative overview on the practices of the same in different parliaments. We also touched upon the Problem-Solving Methodology, presented by Ms. Anne Seadmen on assessing legislation that is popular in the US and many democracies at various stages from introducing and evaluating a new bill to reversing the process and know of a law's impact in positive or vice versa viz a viz the intention of the legislature. In the end, we have suggested certain way forward for effective induction of the new trend of Post Legislative Scrutiny in the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan.

2. Definition and Rationale for Post-Legislative Scrutiny

There are three types of Post Legislative Scrutiny, either referring to:

- (i) A broad legislative review aiming to evaluate whether and to what extent a piece of legislation has achieved its intended purpose, or
- (ii) A more focused evaluation of how a piece of legislation is working in practice. As a consequence, the act of Post Legislative Scrutiny requires the parliament to perform three distinct functions namely:

a. **To MONITOR DELEGATED LEGISLATION/RULES** so that the intent and application of legislation approved by the Parliament is responded especially by timely enactment and the adoption of necessary secondary or delegated legislation (i.e reviewing the Rules made by the respective government institution by parliamentary committees helps implement the intent of the legislature).

b. **To OBJECTIVELY undertake an IMPACT ASSESSMENT of the law** as a tradition after a specific period of three to five years through the respective parliamentary committee. Here, different tools or theoretical framework may be followed such as the Problem-Solving Methodology in

which legislators identify the problematic social behaviour and then propose a solution in the form of a new bill through a step by step ROCCIPI (*Rules, Opportunity, Capacity, Communication, Interest, Process and Ideology*) Model focusing on to tracing the causes and reason behind problematic social behaviour before finding a solution through draft new bill.¹ This world known method was first devised by Full Bright Scholar Dr. Prof Ann Siedman, which is being followed by the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) in assessing bills and laws. The same Methodology, in reverse ROCCIPI (details deliberated in the paper) can be helpful in impact assessment of the law after a span of few years by researchers and legislative community in general and the legislature in particular to see if the law delivered the change in social behaviour that was initially targeted.

- c. **To EVALUATE and ensure that the normative aims** of policies are reflected in the results and effects of legislation.²

A systematic analysis and assessment of law enhances the Members of Parliaments' (MPs) insights with regard to the impacts of legislation and they are able to not only address the key question of not only how an Act of Parliament is working but at the same time ensuring that the referent actors are functioning well together in line with the legislation. The practise of Post Legislative Scrutiny thus improves a parliaments' oversight of the causal relationship between a law and its effects, as the accuracy of assumptions underlying legislation are tested after its enactment through gathering empirical evidence. Moreover, the process of evaluation is also the by-product of a parliament carrying out effective executive oversight by reviewing government action or inaction by amending and improving legislation(s). The Post legislative scrutiny helps the legislature in evaluating whether a law is fit for the purpose it was enacted as well as to monitor to what extent the government is managing the effective implementation and abidance of statutory obligations. However, the act of carrying out Post Legislative Scrutiny on a primary basis goes beyond executive oversight as it is an act of internal monitoring and evaluating system by which a parliament is also able to consider and reflect on the merits of its own democratic output and internal technical ability.

3. Limitations of Post-Legislative Scrutiny

The UK Law Commission in its report in 2006³ commented that that Post Legislative Scrutiny should concentrate on outcomes of legislation and the reviewing body of a particular legislation must exercise a constructive and future oriented debate rather than divulging itself into a mere repetition of arguments that were advanced during the passage of the Bill. As both the parliament and the government have a common goal in working for the betterment of its policies and legislation, a combination of political will and political judgment is important for a

¹ Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services PIPS, *Drafting and Assessing Legislation* (Islamabad: Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, 2012), 77-80.

² Franklin De Vrieze and Victoria Hasson, *Post Legislative Scrutiny: Comparative study of practices of Post-Legislative Scrutiny in selected parliaments and the rationale for its place in democracy assistance* (London: Westminster Foundation For Democracy, 2017), Available at: <https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Comparative-Study-PLS-WEB.pdf>

³ "The Law Commission, Post-Legislative Scrutiny," lawcon.gov.uk, No 302, London, October 2006.

more evolved systematic approach to Post Legislative Scrutiny. Moreover, Post Legislative Scrutiny place a great deal of demand on resources on availability of time. Therefore, such evaluations must be most emphasized towards legislation of some significance, for example, legislations that involve substantial amount of state expenditure or have a substantial impact on social issues.

It is also worth noting the importance of how the findings of Post Legislative Scrutiny will be used in the Parliament. It can either be:

- i. Introduced as amendments to legislation,
- ii. Submissions as parliamentary questions,
- iii. Introduced as motions,
- iv. Relevant Committee can hold public hearings to review impact assessment and invite experts to advice on the same in presence of stakeholders.
- v. Sending a report to the Executive and requesting a response within a period of time, or as input for a position paper/opinionated paper in preparation for a new law.

4. Impact Assessment by Post Legislative Scrutiny - Anne Siedman' s PROBLEM-SOLVING REVERSE ROCCIPI- Model

Prof Dr. Anne Willcox Siedman, Full bright Scholar of economics, who served as a Professor in US and China as well as Law and Development practitioner in many African countries, presented a new approach in legislative theory by giving the Problem-Solving Methodology to develop and draft a new bill, which in REVERSE can be an ideal tool for Post Legislative Scrutiny. Parliamentary Committees or Members of Parliament interested to assess a law to see if it brought the intended change in social behaviour to solve a problem, can after three to five years of enactment undertake this approach and process, whose key postulates are as under:

- i. **R for RULE:** This is first step of post legislative scrutiny, i.e to see what problematic behaviour led to enactment when law was passed; what were its different key ways forward? Does appropriate delegated legislation/ rules were in time drawn by the respective executive Ministry/department? Has the Law been an overall success?
- ii. **O for Opportunity:** Does the law stop the opportunity for the relevant actor to misbehave? If not, there needs to be amendment in the law so that it should try to change the environment to make that behaviour all the more difficult.
- iii. **C for Capacity:** The Legislators will analyse does the relevant institutions, implementing agencies and Executive heads, who were expected to apply the law, possess the essential knowledge, ownership, skills, and resources to implement the said law provisions, or vice versa. This will help scrutinize non-accountable decision-making to fill up the gaps of either undertaking capacity building of officers and concerned actors and/or investing more specific resources or simply amend law to give responsibility and resources where capacity may be enhanced to bring the fruits of the law.

- iv. **C for Communication:** Many times in developing countries very relevant legislation is not properly advertised for actors to know that its about them nor institutions may take ownership of same. Therefore, post legislative scrutiny will check if public at large and main actors concerned had appropriate knowledge about the law. Legislature can ask question from the executive as to what communication methods were entailed for stakeholders to know about the provisions of said law. Parliament can advise and recommend government to undertake wider communication of the law through newspapers, television, social media and FM Radio as well as direct announcements to affected communities so that they know and utilize the law. For example, may labour law provisions are implemented in Pakistan yet most of employees especially large number in private service from industry to services sector like education, health, etc do not know their basic rights such as minimum wage, essential security provisions, medical facility, etc.
- v. **I for Interest or Incentive:** It pertains to actors' own perceptions viz a viz how the existing law's costs and benefits affect them and people close to them. The Legislature will scrutinize that what incentives the law gave to relevant actors to behave as they do. Does the law provide affected actors the incentive to leave the problematic behaviour for better or otherwise? The MPs must see that incentives in form of money and penalties in form of fines can sometimes have adverse effect. Few actors take into account the law's paper penalty. Drivers on highways may worry less about the speed limit than a radar-equipped police car that hides around the next bend of the road. That suggests the need, not for greater penalties, but for more patrols. For example, an old law in country's federal territory puts a meager financial penalty to those cutting forests in the city, far lesser than a single tree's cost. Thus, it had to improve through post legislative scrutiny to introduce wider awareness for protection of national parks and a penalty of imprisonment along with bigger fine for cutting trees.
- vi. **P for Process:** When at the stage of new law being enacted, new processes are laid for offices and implementing agencies that are the key to curb adverse social behaviour into responsible law abiding actions. Therefore, in post legislative scrutiny the MPs and Committees must reverse processing to see what process in existing law and its subsequent rules/delegated legislation, was devised for complex settings such as institutions i.e corporations, Non-government organizations, schools, trade unions, cooperatives, and especially implementing agencies like police, courts, ministries, agencies, departments, offices, local government? Does it allow solution or added new dimensions to the problematic behaviours? Does the process entailed been followed in letter and spirit? This is a thorough category for post legislative efforts that needs attention of the legislators and it can surely help committees give focused recommendations to the House.
- vii. **I for Ideology (values and attitudes):** It refers to matters of belief, encompassing values, attitudes, socio economic view of the world and religious

beliefs, existing myths in the society. In Post Legislative Scrutiny, public dialogue and hearings may help to identify and address matters of ideology to recommend a solution, which is owned by the community after understanding and clarity viz a viz their ideological considerations.⁴

5. Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Pakistan

Various parliaments in the world are beginning to proceduralise Post-Legislative Scrutiny as a separate mechanism within parliament, however, such an independent mechanism is still not to be seen as entrenched within the parliament of Pakistan as it is found within the more evolved and developed Parliaments of the world. The following recommendations might be worth considering in bringing a systematic assessment and functionality of Post Legislative Scrutiny within the Parliament:

- i. **Amending Rules for systematic PLS tradition:** The Senate and the National Assembly and the Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan may amend their respective rules of procedure, enhancing the role of standing committees as well as actively make and engage, in addition to them, from time to time, Select Committees for the provision of Post-Legislative Scrutiny as a part of its routine activity, entrenching a systematic approach to Post Legislative Scrutiny in the Parliament.
- ii. **PLS Theory through Problem Solving ROCCIPI Model:** The National Assembly and the Senate of Pakistan's Rules of Procedures may be amended to add specific Rule/s that can help formally give procedure and process of post legislative scrutiny and impact assessment of existing laws. The role of legislation and research branches in both Houses as well as PIPS, can be invaluable input. PIPS is already providing technical support in assessment of laws to individual MPs through the Problem-Solving ROCCIPI Model, in addition to hosting public hearings on laws engaging stakeholders on behalf of parliamentary standing committees.
- iii. **Scrutiny and Debate on Reports presented to Parliament:** Many Acts of Parliament in Pakistan that constituted or established any authority, commission, institute or any government organization provides a mandatory inserted provision thereby instructing the same to submit, *its annual reports containing the activities it has undertaken and highlighting the objects of the Act being achieved by such organizations*, before the Parliament or in some cases the board of governors comprising the Members of the Parliament. Such provisions prove to be an indirect mechanism of Post Legislative Scrutiny entrenched within an Act of Parliament whereby the reports submitted, if scrutinized by the Parliament can ensure whether the purposes and objectives of the Act have been well implemented. Thus, in Rules of Procedures of the National Assembly and Senate, clear rule may be inserted to introduce debate on the Reports by the Respective

⁴ PIPS, *Assessing Legislation*, 77-80.

committees followed by their recommendations submitted to the Parliament for ADOPTION that can then be sent to concerned institutions.

- iv. **Parliament review LJCP Recommendations to amend and update Laws:** The **Law & Justice Commission of Pakistan** that was established in 1979 under the **Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan Ordinance 1979**, is also tasked with studying and reviewing on a continuing basis the statutes and other laws and making recommendations to the federal and provincial governments for their improvement, modernization and reforms. The Commission is a Federal Government institution, headed by the Chief Justice of Pakistan and seated in the Supreme Court of Pakistan. It is responsible to make report and make recommendations to the Federal and Provincial Governments for the improvement, modernization and reform in the Acts of Parliament to the President of Pakistan. Thus President, being part of the Parliament, may forward the same to both Houses of the Parliament to take these reports into consideration and respective standing committees can commence the tradition of post legislative scrutiny accordingly as they are already mandated to oversight respective Ministries/departments.
- v. **CCI Reports:** The Article 228 of the Constitution established the **Council of Islamic Ideology** and entrusted the same to make and submit annual reports and recommend to the parliament or provincial assemblies to bring existing laws in conformity with the Principles of Islam. The CCI recommendations may again be part of Parliament's PLS activity.
- vi. **National Commission for Human Rights ("NCHR"):** One of the functions of NCHR under the Act prescribes the same to review the Constitution or any other law of the country that provides safeguards for the protection of human rights and recommend new legislation, amendment of existing laws and adoption or amendment of administrative measures for their effective implementation.⁵
- vii. **Parliamentary Caucus across parties can commence PLS** as a tradition that any MPs being member can then steer in the House through asking a Question or introducing amendments, etc.
- viii. The Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies may undertake a democratic review of all the laws that were enacted during the colonial era primarily designed to control its subjects and the ordinances promulgated during the military regime based on provisional Constitutional Orders or Martial Law proclamations, both that are contrary to the democratic aspirations of its citizens of an independent state.

⁵ *National Commission for Human Rights Act 2012*, (Pakistan), Available at: https://nchr.gov.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/en1_NCHR-ACT-2012.pdf

- ix. As a good practice, a **sunset clause or a provision of review of law** by the Parliament and provincial assemblies after three to five years may be embedded in every new bill introduced.
- x. On creation of Pakistan, its first Constituent Assembly led by the father of the Nation as the Founding President (Speaker) conducted review of all international treaties and even **visit reports of Pakistan delegations to international bodies/countries as parliament was briefed by the Government** on it. Presently, the Parliament in Pakistan has little role in ratification and implementation of international treaties except for its inherent role in the incorporation of the same in the Act of Parliament. A lot of international treaties are merely ratified without being incorporated within the Act of Parliament which confers a binding status internationally. The ratification of international treaties is currently solely attributed to the Cabinet and the Prime Minister of Pakistan under the **Rules of Business 1973**. However, we have seen some changes within the Parliament where Joint Parliamentary Committees have been formed to keep check and oversee the agreements that are signed under the CPEC, which is in itself a step in the right direction within the overall ambit of parliamentary oversight in general and post legislative scrutiny in particular.

The Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies by amending their rules of procedure may further advance the parameters of standing committees as well as few select committees and thus also attributing the activity of Post Legislative Scrutiny to the same. In Senate of Pakistan, the tradition has already taken root in the form of Committee for Delegated Legislation, and similarly, many standing committees, including Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has recently approached reforms through comparative analysis of its own working with other countries. In a nutshell, both the Houses of Parliament may commence with formation of select committees for the task of scrutiny of significant laws that have a substantial interest and degree of social impact, concentrating the legislation to a particular legislation or an area covering many related or connected laws. Meanwhile amendments in rules may be inserted to allow Ministerial Standing Committees the role of undertaking PLS as a tradition in addition to allow laying and debate on all relevant Reports to improving laws, especially LJCP, CCI and NCHR respectively. The provincial assemblies that are now already responsible for legislation, representation and oversight of numerous devolved subjects after the 18th Constitutional Amendment, may easily replicate the theory and practice of Post Legislative Scrutiny (PLS) being introduced here and some already under evolution at the National Parliament.

ANALYSIS

US brokered Abraham Agreement between the UAE and Israel**Fakiha Mahmood**Research Officer,
Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services**Abstract**

On 13th August 2020, the President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump announced the successful brokering of an agreement between UAE and Israel, termed as the Abraham Agreement, which will pave the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Years of informal ties between the two countries have culminated into the agreement which is expected to develop diplomatic ties of first gulf Arab country with Israel. Though the agreement seems to be an outcome of President Trump's personal aspirations led by his senior advisor and a close family member, i.e. Jared Kushner, if the agreement is implemented in letter and spirit it will have far reaching consequences for peace and security beyond the Middle East region. This paper seeks to analyze the situation which has emerged out of the agreement between UAE and Israel. An attempt has been made to find out as to how the Palestine-Israel conflict has evolved under the Trump Administration. How the states within the region and beyond have responded to this agreement and what major factors count in Pakistan's calculus of Israel's recognition?

1. Introduction

On 13th August 2020, the President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump announced the successful brokering of an agreement between UAE and Israel which will pave the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Both the countries have “committed to the exchange of embassies and ambassadors and to begin cooperation in a broad range of fields including education, healthcare, trade, and security.”¹

Years of informal ties between the two countries have culminated into the agreement which is expected to develop diplomatic ties of first gulf Arab country with Israel. Only two other Arab countries, i.e. Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994) have overt ties with Israel. While the UAE has dubbed the agreement as a way forward for peace in the Middle East on the basis of Israel's announcement to defer the annexation of West Bank. The Israeli Prime Minister has not shied away from reiterating that the annexation plan has only been deferred not cancelled.

Though the two countries have announced brokering of the agreement, however, the recent visit of senior US Presidential Advisor, Jared Kushner, to Middle East has also highlighted some serious differences between UAE and Israel. Major difference between the two sides emerges out of the UAE desire to get sophisticated weapons from the US which the Israel wants to hinder. A difficult situation can emerge for Jared Kushner, who has been appointed solely on the basis of his family relationship with President Donald Trump. And if he loses the upcoming

¹ The White House, “President Donald J. Trump has secured a historic deal between Israel and the United Arab Emirates to advance peace and prosperity in the region,” *Fact Sheets* August 13, 2020, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-secured-historic-deal-israel- united-arab-emirates-advance-peace-prosperity-region/>.

election, Jared Kushner will lose any influence or authority to play an instrumental role in the signing of the agreement.² However, if the agreement is implemented as envisaged it will have far reaching consequences for peace and security within and beyond the gulf/middle eastern region.

Key questions:

- a) How the Palestine-Israel conflict has evolved under the Trump Administration?
- b) How the states within the Middle East region and beyond have responded to the agreement?
- c) What major factors count in Pakistan's calculus of Israel's recognition?

2. Recognition of statehood

The most widely accepted formulation of the criteria of statehood emerges from Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention on Rights and Duties of States, 1933. The Article stipulates that in order for a state to be recognized as an international person, it should possess following characteristics: a) a permanent population, b) a defined territory, c) government; and d) the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

However, international law experts assert that the recognition of statehood depends more on political considerations and less on legal factors. Beyond applying the relevant legal consequences to an on-ground situation, recognition rests more with the will and aspirations of the state who is supposed to recognize another entity as state.³

3. 'Deal of the Century?': Palestine-Israel conflict under the Trump Administration

The President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump, has been widely seen as the most pro-Israeli US President ever due to the policies he has adopted towards Palestine-Israel conflict. Even before the publishing of his proposals for resolving the issue in January 2020, analysts had predicted that his initiative of "**Peace to Prosperity: A vision to improve the lives of Palestinian and Israeli people**"⁴ will be inclined towards Israel and will ignore Palestinian rights, fundamental principles of international law, and will ultimately damage the idea of two-states solution. The document was expected to serve as a go ahead for the Israeli government to further consolidate its illegal occupation of the East Jerusalem and strategic areas of the West Bank.⁵

Various steps taken under the Trump Administration clearly point towards a pro-Israeli inclination of US up to the level of attempts to eliminate Palestinian political identity forever. Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital and shifted its embassy there, it recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Syrian Golan Heights. US under the Trump Administration also stopped funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The funding cut has been decided so that the Palestinian refugees should stop

² "Obstacles keep Israel, UAE from finalizing 'peace deal,'" *The News*, September 05, 2020.

³ Malcolm N. Shaw, *International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 329-330.

⁴ "Peace to Prosperity: A vision to improve the lives of Palestinian and Israeli people," <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Peace-to-Prosperity-0120.pdf>.

⁵ Muriel Asseburg, "The 'Deal of the Century' for Israel-Palestine," *SWP Comment* April 20, 2019, https://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/comments/2019C20_ass.pdf.

insisting on their right of return. US has also been pressing Jordan to naturalize the Palestinians living in their country by shredding their refugee status.⁶

President Trump also announced on Friday, Sept., 11, 2020 that “the Persian Gulf Kingdom of Bahrain would establish full diplomatic relations with Israel. Bahrain’s move, a month after the United Arab Emirates normalized relations, brings the number of Arab countries that recognize Israel to four, and furthers a strategic realignment of the Middle East. But this latest Arab-Israeli entente is neither a bolt from the blue nor the result of months of delicate shuttle diplomacy by the Trump administration. Israel and the Arab leaders in the Persian Gulf had been quietly cultivating ties for years, united by their common antipathy toward Iran and worries about a vacuum in the region because of American retrenchment.”⁷ “The import of this is much more strategic than peace-related,” said Martin S. Indyk, who served as American ambassador to Israel under Bill Clinton and Middle East peace envoy under Barack Obama.

Box 1: A timeline of UAE-Israel normalization of ties

August 13, 2020: President Trump announced the ‘Abraham Agreement’:

President Donald J. Trump announced that UAE and Israel have agreed to normalize bilateral ties.

August 16, 2020: Israel and UAE launch direct phone links:

In the wake of normalization of ties, UAE and Israel inaugurated direct telephone services between their countries. Telecom providers in the UAE unblocked calls to numbers with Israel’s country code.

August 29, 2020: UAE cleared legal path for closer Israeli ties:

The President of the UAE issued Federal Decree-Law No. 04 of 2020, abolishing the Federal Law No. 15 of 1972, this law banned trade and business deals with Israeli firms and specified penalties for violation of the ban put in place.

August 31, 2020: Israel flies first commercial flight to UAE:

The first commercial flight from Israel to the UAE took place, carrying a delegation of Israeli and US officials. Carrying delegates including Donald Trump’s son-in-law and senior advisor Jared Kushner and Israel’s National Security Advisor, Meir Ben-Shabbat, the flight crossed the Saudi Arabian airspace which is normally blocked for Israeli air traffic.

September 01, 2020: UAE, Israel enhance bilateral investment:

Both countries have agreed to form working groups and bilateral committees to boost cooperation in financial services.

September 02, 2020: Saudi Arabia allows Israeli flights over its skies:

Saudi Arabia removed restrictions for all countries to cross over its skies. The decision came as a result of the request of UAE General Civil Aviation Authority to allow over the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s airspace.

September 02, 2020: Kuwait denies Israeli planes over its airspace:

Kuwait categorically rejected the passing of Israeli planes over its airspace emphasizing that Kuwait will be the last country to normalize relations with Israel.

September 03, 2020: Israel starts cargo flight for Dubai:

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “Another Arab State recognizes Israel – Heres why it matters,” *The New York Times*, September, 12, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/12/world/middleeast/bahrain-israel.html>

Israel's national carrier El Al announced first cargo flight from Tel Aviv to Dubai to be scheduled for September 16, 2020.

September 03, 2020: Bahrain allows Israeli flights to UAE over its airspace:

Without naming specifically Israel, Bahrain announced that it will allow flights coming to and departing from the UAE over its airspace.

September 11, 2020: Bahrain commences diplomatic relations with Israel

Sources:

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- The New York Times, Sept., 12, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/12/world/middleeast/bahrain-israel.html>

The two-state solution of Palestine issue has become a one state reality under the Trump Administration. Israel controls the entire region between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean where the Palestinian Authority has been reduced to the level of deputy sheriff. Peace talks have not held since April 2014. Israel's security cabinet authorized an entirely new settlement in the central West Bank in March 2017 after a gap of twenty-five years. As the conflict management mechanisms between Palestinians and Israelis have virtually ended, clashes over Holy sites have become a norm, resulting in frequent deaths of Palestinians at the hands of Israeli security forces. The increasing US collusion with Israel has threatened the very existence of Palestinian Authority. The US ended its financial support for the Palestinian Authority and Palestinians civil society and closed the PLO's office in Washington D.C. in 2018.⁸

4 International response

⁸ Ibid.

The agreement brokered by the United States of America has been hailed in some European capitals including the European Union, France, UK, Austria, and by the countries with which Israel has already established diplomatic ties among the Arab nations e.g. Egypt. Among the Muslim countries, Turkey and Iran have raised most severe criticism. An obvious harsh response from the Palestinian Authority emerged inviting public demonstrations against UAE.

Though Saudi Arabia has allowed Israeli planes over its airspace, the Kingdom has denounced any intention to recognize Israel without the establishment of a Palestinian State with its capital in East Jerusalem and Israeli withdrawal from areas captured in the 1967 war along with a just solution for Palestinian refugees. It has also expressed commitment to the Arab Peace Plan, a Saudi backed initiative of 2002. Saudi Arabia has condemned Israel's unilateral policies of annexation and building settlements as detrimental to the two-state solution.⁹ Similarly, an OIC press release issued on 24 August 2020, reiterated that Palestine "is at the heart of the OIC's joint Islamic action and the main consensus of all Member States, which all endeavor to end the Israeli occupation and help the Palestinian people realize their legitimate rights."¹⁰

Sudan dismissed the spokesman for its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Haidar Badawi, in response to his statement that the country is "looking forward to concluding a peace agreement with Israel." The remarks of the spokesman had encouraged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to immediately conclude a deal. Sudan's Foreign Minister criticized the rumors of deal with Israel.¹¹ During the visit of the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, the Prime Minister of Sudan made it clear that Sudan has no intention to develop bilateral relations with Israel by recognizing the state of Israel.¹²

Oman and Morocco were dubbed as the states which are expected to follow the toe the line adopted by the UAE.¹³ A look at the past reveals these countries had recognized Israel around mid-1990s, however they later on terminated their ties with Israel. While this subject requires detailed scrutiny, their recognition of Israel during that period may have come about as a result of the pressure generated out of the peace treaty Jordan signed with Israel in 1994.

Box 2:**a. Countries who have never recognized and/or had foreign relations with Israel:**

Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Comoros, Djibouti, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

b. Countries who had developed relations with Israel at some point in history

⁹ "Kingdom committed to Arab Peace Plan: FM," *Saudi Gazette*, August 19, 2020, <https://saudigazette.com.sa/article/596827/SAUDI-ARABIA/Kingdom-committed-to-Arab-Peace-Plan-FM>.

¹⁰ Organization of Islamic Cooperation, "Organization of Islamic Cooperation affirms its Constant Position on the Palestinian Cause," 24 August 2020, https://www.oic-oci.org/topic/?t_id=23777&t_ref=14148&lan=en.

¹¹ "Sudan fires spokesman after comments on peace with Israel," *Arab News*, August 20, 2020.

¹² "Sudan PM tells Pompeo he has no right to normalize ties with Israel," *Dawn*, August 26, 2020.

¹³ "Bahrain tells Pompeo it is committed to creation of Palestinian state," *Dawn*, August 27, 2020.

however, they terminated ties with Israel later (time period of relations mentioned in parenthesis)

Bahrain (1996-2000), Bolivia (1950-2009), Chad (1960-1972), Cuba (1950-1973), Guinea (1959-1967), Iran (1948-1951, 1953-1979), Mali (1960-1973), Morocco (1994-2000), Mauritania (2000-2009), Nicaragua (1948-1982, 1992-2010), Niger (1960-1973, 1996-2002), Oman (1996-2000), Qatar (1996-2009), Tunisia (1996-2000), Venezuela (1950-2009).

Source: <https://brilliantmaps.com/israel-foreign-relations/>.

A cautious response emerged from Russia and China. A statement of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized that stability in the Middle East depends on the successful resolution of the Palestinian problem. Without taking outright side with any party, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs reaffirmed China's unwavering support for Palestinian self-determination. The statements of the two countries reflect uncertainty on their part emerging out of the efforts to balance ties with all sides. Russian apprehensions stem out of the implications of Abraham accord on the regional military balance especially with reference to Iran. Similarly, China is concerned about its impact on Chinese economic interests in the Middle East.¹⁴

5. The legacy of Pakistan's founding fathers on Palestine's struggle for liberation

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Founding Father of Pakistan and the President/ Speaker of the First Constituent (National) Assembly of Pakistan, was an ardent supporter of Palestinian cause since the passage of the Balfour Declaration. Under his leadership, the All India Muslim League (AIML) passed 18 resolutions in support of the people of Palestine from 1933 to 1946. The AIML regularly observed Palestine Day on his call. The AIML also established a Palestine Fund in order to provide financial support to the dependents of those who had lost their lives or suffered in the struggle for independence. Jinnah sent a four member Muslim League delegation to Cairo in October 1938 to attend an Arab Leaders' Conference on Palestine. At personal level, the Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah highlighted the issue in his speeches as well as in his communication with world leaders and sent various emissaries at international forums to play active role in supporting the Palestinian cause.¹⁵

Soon after the announcement of the Declaration of the Independence of State of Israel, i.e. **on May 14, 1948, the Constituent Assembly (legislature) of Pakistan adopted the resolution to condemn the move on 26 May 1948.** Moved by Hon. Nur Ahmed the resolution stated:

“That this Assembly records its strong condemnation of the Jewish aggression in Palestine which has continued under the protection of the Mandatory for over a quarter of a century and has culminated in the proclamation of the so-called State of Israel and calls upon the Pakistan Government not to accord any kind of recognition to this so-called State and to oppose every attempt that may be made to have this fiction masquerading as a State admitted as a Member of the United Nations, as such a step, in

¹⁴ Samuel Ramani, “Russian and Chinese views on the Israel-UAE normalization deal,” *Middle East Institute* August 27, 2020, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/russian-and-chinese-views-israel-uae-normalization-deal>.

¹⁵ Farooq Ahmad Dar, *Jinnah's Pakistan: Formation and Challenges of a State* (Karachi: Oxford University Press) 311-314.

the opinion of this Assembly, **would constitute a breach of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and direct threat to international peace.**

This Assembly further requests the Pakistan Government to convey to the Arab League and the Arabs of Palestine the deep sympathy of Pakistan with their struggle in the cause of justice and peace in Palestine.”

6. UAE-Israel agreement in the context of Kashmir conflict

The UAE-Israel agreement has been announced at the time when Pakistan has been putting its efforts to get rid of the Indian illegal occupation of the Jammu and Kashmir. In the wake of the August 05, 2019 acts of the Narendra Modi led BJP government in India, policy makers in Islamabad are trying hard to garner international support to denounce the Hindutva inspired fascist policies of Modi government in Delhi. As a consequence of these efforts, the United Nations Security convened a meeting to discuss the Kashmir issue after a break of more than five decades. Also the Council refused to strike the issue off the Council agenda at the behest of India.

Pakistan also made efforts to utilize the forum of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to garner support of Muslim countries. However, a lukewarm response from the OIC generated a diplomatic spat between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia that dominates the largest international organization of Muslim states in the world. The announcement of an agreement between UAE and Israel at this juncture only serves to undermine the prospective cooperation among Muslim states in order to deal with the challenges facing these countries. UAE had already faced severe criticism in Pakistan last year for awarding Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon after he provided domestic legal cover to the illegal Indian occupation of the Jammu and Kashmir.

A Pakistani recognition of Israel will undermine the legal and moral underpinnings of its claim over its “Shah rag” i.e. the jugular vein as termed by the founding father of Pakistan. While India has already changed the reality of Kashmir in its favor with sheer use of force and intimidation, core thing left with Pakistan so far is its just legal, political and moral claim which echoes in the highest diplomatic forums of the world. The recognition of Israel will be translated as if Pakistan recognizes the illegal occupation of a land and its people, forcibly denying their right of freedom, with illegal use of force involving worst form of human rights violations and utter disregard of the international law. It will create an embarrassing situation for anybody who carries the slogan of right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir anywhere in the world. More so, it will be a jolt to the ideological basis of Pakistan that was created on the basis of two-nation theory that translated into freedom on basis of areas with majority-vote of Muslims forming Pakistan and vice versa for Bharat. Any compromise on country’s ideological basis and the unwavering commitment with the Kashmir Cause for short-term appeasement of US President remains a non-starter and rather unthinkable.

7. Conclusion

The dream of two-state solution of the Palestine-Israel conflict has become a one state, i.e. the state of Israel, reality under the Trump Administration. The agreement is an outcome of Trump Administration, which made no effort to hide its pro-Israeli approach. In wake of November

Presidential elections, it naturally is an effort to appease Trump's Administration. And the future of this agreement very much depends upon the result of upcoming US presidential election. The existing differences between UAE and Israel can prove detrimental if Trump fails to regain the Presidency.

Though UAE has been stressing that the deal between the UAE and Israel is a harbinger for peace in the region, on ground situation can be gauged from the fact that the role of currently the Palestinian Authority (PA) is not more than a deputy sheriff whose existence is under threat as US has already cut its funding for the PA and closed its office in the Washington DC. Whereas the Hamas and Hezbollah are now sitting together to discuss the situation emerging out of the UAE-Israel peace deal; it, in no way contribute any bit in the peace process but to the contrary undermines the Palestinian Authority and enhances chances of bloodshed in the already bleeding history of Palestinian struggle for freedom.

The euphoria generated as a result of the deal may sound great for republican supporters in the US, it otherwise soon subsided as no other Arab or Muslim country came forward to follow the pathway created by UAE and Bahrain. High level visits of various regional countries from US side including that of senior advisor, Jared Kushner, and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have been coordinated with the aim to announce more agreements. However, these efforts did not produce results beyond the opening of airspace by one or more countries.

In the case of Pakistan, the ideological foundation that binds diverse ethnic and linguistic communities together, and country's unmitigated resolve and commitment to the Kashmiri struggle for self-determination against the illegal Indian occupation of Kashmir valley are two major factors that will continue to tinker on the minds of the policy makers while they ponder over the question of whether to recognize Israel or not? At the same time Israel's entry in the gulf region is certainly a significant development. Its consequences cannot be underestimated. Pakistan will have to prepare in advance in order to live up to this reality if it materializes as such. The shifting power dynamics at regional as well as global level certainly provide the window of opportunity to cope with the emerging challenges, with reaffirmation of country's ideological basis as envisaged by the founding fathers and first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.

OPINION

Afghan Peace Process**Laraib Kiani**Young Parliamentary Officer
Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services**1. Introduction**

After almost nineteen years of war in Afghanistan, February 29th, 2020, has led to yet another effort towards viable peace. Following 9/11 attacks in New York, Al-Qaeda and the Taliban (for their support to Al-Qaeda) became grave security concern for the US and its allies thus giving the US a justification to jump into another military invasion - Afghanistan in October 2001. The following years have not been easy for the Afghans, U.S, NATO, ISAF and the international community. It had worst repercussions for Pakistan whose resilient people, police and security forces had to bear terrorist attack leaving over 50,000 deaths.

Though the Taliban regime was ousted and replaced by US incubated democratic government, it led to greater insurgency and the country was rampaged by militancy as a consequence. For years, the international community believed in use of military might to combat and end terrorism. However, use of force failed to bring fruitful results.

Successive US governments have been looking for a way to end war and curb terrorist activities that have costed thousands of lives, both civilian and military and sucked billions of dollars from the US economy. To end the violent battle in Afghanistan, US used carrot and stick policy as well as divide and rule tactics; thus political agreement for resolution was employed only to result in failure, and pushed Taliban to change the forms and tactics of war. Despite this, Pakistan and other allies kept persuading US and Afghan government to resort to dialogue to achieve lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

2. Dialogue and Negotiations

US President Donald Trump, due to domestic pressure has vowed to withdraw forces from Afghanistan. However, this is only possible by establishing some semblance of peace through agreement between the warring parties in Afghanistan. With the aim of bringing the US soldiers back to their country, first ever US-Taliban direct talks were held in Doha, Qatar in July 2018. Later in September, 2018, US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad was appointed as the Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation to speed up the reconciliatory efforts. This was the first time, US government negotiated directly with the Taliban without taking the Afghan government on board.¹ Ambassador Khalilzad shuttled between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Qatar to hold meetings with Taliban representatives to ensure a peace deal as soon as possible.

In March 2019, Ambassador Khalilzad announced that he would soon achieve agreement with the Taliban representatives to facilitate US withdrawal of forces while ensuring end of hostilities and terrorist activities in and outside Afghanistan by Taliban. The next step would have been

¹Qaisar Nasrat, "Negotiating with the Taliban: How will it affect the future of Afghanistan?", *Journal Of Academic Perspective On Social Studies*, no. 1 (2020), <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/japss/issue/54386/600987>. (Accessed on 09-09-2020)

intra-Afghan dialogue for complete peace and ceasefire. However, this could not be reached as President Trump called off the dialogue in response to killing of U.S. soldier in a terrorist attack, that proved the weak truce achieved. U.S.-Taliban negotiations resumed about three months later. Finally on February 29th, 2020, Taliban and the US reached agreement, which claims to have laid down the groundwork to initiate “Intra-Afghan negotiations” towards a comprehensive political settlement of the crisis.

Key Points of the agreement

The agreement between US and Taliban on Feb., 29th, 2020 revolved around following four key points:

- i. Withdrawal of foreign troops from the Afghan soil over a period of fourteen months;
- ii. Assurance by the Taliban that Afghan soil will not be used against US by making it launch pad for terrorist attacks and activities and that Taliban will ensure that it does not become safe haven for other terrorist organizations (Al-Qaeda and ISIS) to plan and execute attacks against US;
- iii. Beginning of Intra-Afghan Dialogue in second week of March 2020 between Taliban and Afghan government;
- iv. Cessation of violence and prisoner exchange.²

3 Obstacles and hindrances in Intra-Afghan Dialogue:

3.1 Afghan presidential elections and political tug of war: Intra-Afghan Dialogue was expected to begin in the second week of March 2020; however, various obstacles prevented a smooth start. The process could not be initiated as Ashraf Ghani and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah were yet again at impasse after presidential elections and delayed the start of negotiations. On May 17, 2020, President Ashraf Ghani reached compromise with his electoral rival. The agreement led to Ashraf Ghani taking oath as the President and Dr. Abdullah became the Chairman of High Council for National Reconciliation and the leading figure in negotiations with Taliban.³

3.2 Prisoner exchange: Once power sharing agreement was achieved between President Ashraf Ghani and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, the key impediment was the prisoner exchange in disproportionate numbers; a condition which was agreed without taking the Afghan government on board. Initially, the condition hit wall and stalled initiation of negotiations. However, Afghan government later released majority of the prisoner except for 400 prisoners involved in major terrorist attacks.

The matter of releasing the top Taliban prisoners was taken up in the traditional *Loya Jirga* which urged the government to release the aforementioned prisoners to remove the last

²Lindsay Maizland, "U.S.-Taliban Peace Deal: What to know", *Council On Foreign Relations*, March 02, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-taliban-peace-deal-agreement-afghanistan-war>.

³Clayton Thomas, *Afghanistan: Background And U.S. Policy: In Brief*. Congressional Research Service, June 25, 2020, pp.3-4. <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R45122.pdf>.

stumbling block in the process.⁴ The decision of the Loya Jirga to release all Taliban prisoners was endorsed by President Ghani. However, the government still remains skeptical over releasing the high-profile prisoners as they would lose bargaining edge.

3.3 Trust deficit and escalation in violence: The peace deal was signed between the US government and Taliban directly without taking Afghan government on board. Lack of trust between Afghan government and Taliban is not hidden. The current system of government was established post-removal of Taliban regime and the political elite and security infrastructure have been high on the hit list of the Taliban. Moreover, Taliban refuse to “recognize the Kabul administration as a government but views it as western imported structure working for the continuation of American occupation”,⁵ which does nothing to quell the Afghan government’s apprehensions and fears.

Afghan government’s apprehensions have increased as they claim that the Taliban have violated the condition of cease fire. Since signing the agreement, Taliban have changed their strategy from attacking US and allied security forces to targeting Afghan National Security as they refused ceasefire with the government. Since the deal was signed, there has been a spike in attacks on Afghan security and government officials.⁶

4 Possible Scenarios

The current situation is critical and demands careful and diplomatic maneuvering to ensure the process does not get stalled or halted altogether. In both cases, the outcome will not only impact Afghanistan’s peace and security but also have far reaching global and regional implications. The Afghan government and people are ready to make peace with Taliban after decades of instability, economic destruction and human losses. In retrospect, Taliban are stronger than ever, capable of sustaining themselves financially and carrying out direct and indirect attacks against the government even in the heart of Kabul. On the contrary, the government with a weak economy, fragile political system coupled with deep sectarian and ethnic divides is incapable of battling Taliban.⁷ The Afghan security apparatus is under-equipped and untrained to combat and mitigate terrorist activities as security was run by US and NATO forces. Many believe that the Afghan State itself has come a long way to a true democratic system, progress in infrastructure, education and human development where women rights are not compromised.

4.1 Shattered peace

The process could be disrupted due to political instability and fallout in the Afghan government. The current political power sharing mechanism stands on weak legs. The consensus and harmony between President Ghani and Dr. Abdullah is crucial. On the other hand, keeping the Taliban on the negotiation table is far more critical and challenging. Taliban downrightly deny the legitimacy of the current political system and government and have shown rigidity and less enthusiasm in engaging with Afghan government. There is also no guarantee that Taliban will

⁴ <https://www.dw.com/en/loya-jirga-afghans-remove-major-hurdle-to-usher-in-new-era/a-54504001>

⁵ "Proposed Afghan Peace Parley Hits Snag", *The Express Tribune*, August 15, 2020.

⁶ "Afghan Deaths pileup in uncertainty over U.S. deal with Taliban", *NY Times*, June 27, 2020.

⁷ "Political Settlement And National Reconciliation: The Right Diplomacy For Ending The War In Afghanistan", (repr., Indiana University, May 2020).

honor the terms of the treaty and cease violence when they believe Kabul regime having no roots in masses is only a puppet. The impasse over unacceptable demands put forward by one of the parties increases the possibility of disruption of the peace process.⁸

It remains unclear what US policy will be if Taliban and Afghan government's negotiations do not bear the desired fruit. Eager to appease the domestic public, if the Trump administration still pulls out its forces from Afghanistan, history will most likely be repeated and the country might once again fall into vicious civil war and inevitably a new wave of violence. It is thus imperative that all stakeholders sincerely focus on a peaceful Afghanistan that gives way to a peaceful region.

4.2 *Negotiations towards peace*

- i. **Assurance of Peace not to be compromised even after US withdrawal:** Believing that both, Afghan government and Taliban meet at negotiating table in good faith, the road towards peace will still be full of hitches and obstacles. Current political elite and Taliban antagonize each other in their ideologies and fundamental principles. There are numerous questions that will need to be addressed to reach harmony among society and both parties. Taliban are known as a conservative militant organization so it remains to be seen as to what will be their identity if an agreement is reached? What will be the power sharing formula? Will the Taliban contest in elections as a political party? Does Taliban political office have enough power to ensure that their commanders and soldiers on field give up arms when they believe they are on the cusp of victory? This may prove harder since deal with US and its eagerness to extract forces is being hailed as an ideological success of Taliban.
- ii. **Role of Mediators:** Afghanistan as a country has evolved from the Taliban ruled state. Clash of political and religious ideologies in case of agreement is imminent. It is important how majority of the general public will opt for. A public major concern at the moment is Taliban's perspective on future of Afghan society and similarly how the present regime can remain a voice of sanity reiterating peace rather than their own petty differences. The US-Taliban agreement also fails to address if Taliban and Afghan regimes would negotiate independently or if US and other states like Pakistan and Qatar would continue to play a mediatory role especially after US withdrawal. The deal fails to lay down any sort of framework to ensure that the two parties to the conflict make sincere effort till an intra-Afghan deal is achieved. President Trump has a knack for making rash and hurried decisions without taking into account the consequences or caring that the progress will be ruined. The timeline set by US to drawdown forces i.e. within fourteen months seems a bit unrealistic. US has presence in Afghanistan for almost two decades and provided there are no mediatory countries or parties recognized in the agreement, the country may once again plunge in civil war.⁹
- iii. **Assurance that Afghanistan will never be safe haven to international terrorist groups:** Afghanistan for years has been safe haven for terrorist groups and hub of militancy. The security apparatus in the absence of foreign forces will be insufficient

⁸Maizland, "U.S.-Taliban Peace Deal: What to know".

⁹Raghav Sharma, "The Long Read: What Next For The US-Taliban 'Peace Deal'?", *Asia Research Institute*, April 08, 2020, <https://theasiadialogue.com/2020/04/08/the-long-read-what-next-for-the-us-taliban-peace-deal/>.

to ensure security of the State and its inhabitants. The security will need to be amped up and modified. Taliban have trained fighters but their ability to re-integrate in the society, even as security personnel is dubious. ISIS is digging its root in Afghanistan, which will be the greatest challenge in the near future. Joining hands and forming a joint security force to exterminate ISIS is a plausible answer but difficult to achieve. Agreement must not overlook this dimension as only peace for the US and its face saving withdrawal may not be the only outcome but a long lasting peace for the Afghan people and region at large with assurance that no international terrorist organization will be nurtured must be focused targets of the peace process.

4.3 US Aid and Assistance

The war has left the Afghan economy fragile and insufficient. Afghan economy is largely dependent on international aid particularly from US and accounts for nearly 75% of the total budget. With US political support for Afghanistan wavering, apparently so is the aid. Afghanistan receives US \$4 Billion as security aid annually and roughly US\$500 Million in civilian aid.¹⁰ Trump administration has suspended US \$1 Billion aid for 2020 as a retribution for reluctance and delay in negotiations with Taliban and an additional US \$1 Billion in 2021. COVID-19 has further worsened the already dire situation of the country. Without the direly needed foreign assistance Afghanistan might once again be pushed in the depth of poverty and chaos which caused rise in militancy in the first place. Here regional countries like Pakistan, Russia and every Central Asian countries can offer support to build Afghan cities to help generate employment opportunity.

5. Regional Dynamics

War in Afghanistan spread terrorism and militancy across the globe and destabilized the region, in particular. There was a rise in militancy across the neighbors of Afghanistan especially Pakistan. Pakistan has suffered massive financial losses and thousands of innocent civilian lives were lost as a consequence. If negotiations fail, rise in militancy in Afghanistan is inevitable and disintegration of the installed regime and loss of territorial control to Taliban is written on the wall. Therefore effort must be focused on how Afghanistan will make the transition in post US withdrawal and if democracy will take roots and people will be given right to choose their representative government.

Afghanistan has the attention of regional powers China, Russia, Iran and Pakistan. Although Iran and Russia did not favor Taliban regime in 1990s, both countries now view Taliban as a useful point of leverage vis-a-vis the United States. Moreover, both states favor Taliban for antagonizing and curbing rise of ISIS in Afghanistan for regional security. Hence, both States favor US withdrawal and successful negotiations even it means power sharing between Taliban and the current government till the next elections.

China has economic interests in Afghanistan and desires to exploit the natural resources that can only be accomplished if there is peace and stability in the country. China would like to include Afghanistan in her Belt and Road Initiative. Additionally, China wants to ensure that

¹⁰Mujib Mashal, "For Afghanistan Already on Brink, U.S. Aid Cut Is A Big Shove", *NY Times*, March 24, 2020.

Afghanistan's terrorist network does not impact terrorism in China. However, already engaged with China in trade war, US would not want her nemesis to gain leverage and influence in Afghanistan which has served as a proxy and buffer. Though USA has expressed eager desire to withdraw from Afghanistan, it is unclear how President Trump's administration would respond to China's involvement. In this context, Pakistan, that continues to host round 2.9 million Afghan population since 1979-80 and has its traditional socio economic and political influence can provide regional support to ensure Afghanistan continues peace and prosperity. Thus Pakistan, Iran, Russia and China can develop an understanding with the US, Taliban and the Kabul Regime to support the peace process. India has strategic interests and cordial ties with the current Afghan government as opposed to Taliban. India has used Afghan soil to encircle Pakistan and engage in asymmetric warfare from two fronts. India does not favor Pakistan friendly Taliban gaining power in Afghanistan that again make it a potential host of regional proxy tussles.

6. Conclusion

USA and NATO have had their military footprint in Afghanistan for nearly nineteen years now. An abrupt withdrawal of forces as well as economic aid, especially without securing a lasting deal catering for peaceful transition to local Afghan Government that has recognized working relationship with Taliban; in addition to a mediation role given to recognised regional neighbours of Afghanistan; will be a catastrophic mistake. In such a case, violence in Afghanistan will most likely increase and Kabul can be lost to militancy and tribalism. Afghanistan cannot be left alone to fend for them. Taliban and Afghan government must rethink and review their antagonistic history against each other and reconciliation between them is not as easy as it seems.

Reconciliation will need international mediation and facilitation to ensure peace and stability. US and regional actors will have to ensure that Taliban continue the negotiations in good. Meanwhile, the Afghan security forces need to be trained to maintain the security of their country after US forces withdrawal. Ideally there needs to be a time frame for the next elections and all parties may recognize the laid down timelines for a free and fair elections by a neutral setup and ultimately power is handed over to whoever wins the support of masses in Afghanistan. The country with or without deal, will need foreign aid and assistance to keep the economy stable and preventing economic and humanitarian crisis.

REVIEW & FEEDBACK BY HONORABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND DIGNITARIES ABOUT PIPS RESEARCH AND LEGISLATIVE SERVICES		
COMMENTS BY HONORABLE MEMBERS DURING MEETINGS OF PIPS BOARD OF GOVERNORS		
2020	<i>The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services has a strong and committed Research Team.</i>	Honourable Chairman Senate/ President PIPS BoG Senator Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani's comments while presiding Meeting of Board
2019	<i>Research taught and practiced at PIPS never seen before</i>	Honorable MNA, Ms. Nafeesa Khattak shared students' impressions after PIPS session in Board of Governors Meeting
2019	<i>She apprised that as she was elected in 2013, it was a dream come true to find PIPS that proved its worth in a big way especially in conduct of legislative business by holding thematic seminars and providing researches.</i>	Honourable Shahida Akhter Ali, Member, National Assembly of Pakistan, in meeting of BoG
2019	<i>I found PIPS detailed Research Thematic Papers for Parliamentary delegations representing abroad extremely relevant and useful.</i>	Hon. Amjad Ali Khan, M Member, National Assembly of Pakistan, in meeting of BoG
May 10, 2018	<i>She recognized that PIPS had proved itself in a very short span of time and everyone had realized of its efficacy viz-a-viz legislative, research and capacity building services. She thanked PIPS BoG for providing a common platform where everybody across all parliamentary parties come together to deliberate on most relevant challenges faced by the country.</i>	Hon. Senator Nuzhat Sadiq's appreciation during Board Meeting
Feb 2018	<i>He congratulated the PIPS leadership and entire team for their untiring efforts as a bridge between people of Pakistan and the Parliament.</i>	Hon. Senator Farhat ullah Babar during PIPS BoG Meeting
Feb 2018	<i>She appreciated PIPS Services for the MPs and expressed that with greater ownership of board members it has and will markedly enhance its services.</i>	Honorable Senator Rubina Khalid's feedback to the BoG.
Feb 08, 2017	<i>The Hon. President PIPS BoG expressed his satisfaction that PIPS has supported and closely monitored the progress of the Parliamentary Studies Program and 17 universities have offered Parliamentary Studies as an elective course in social science and law degrees.</i>	The then Honorable President PIPS BoG/ Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, while presiding PIPS BoG.
Feb 08, 2017	<i>She apprised the BoG that it has articulated KPI led legislative, research, training and outreach services that has helped PIPS team to make a paradigm shift in their output. PIPS is an asset of Parliament of Pakistan.</i>	Honorable MNA, Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, the then State Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage
April 13, 2016	<i>He appreciated the initiative to send anticipated research papers to Committee members on climate change and the Monthly Research Digest to Members of the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies as a credible initiative.</i>	Hon. Zahid Hamid, MNA and the then Federal Minister of Law and Justice, Climate Change
REVIEW BY HONORABLE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND DIGNATORIES		
2016	<i>Very comprehensive Technical Research Report on Population</i>	Honorable Malik Muhammad Uzair Khan, MNA, May 2016
March 2016	<i>PIPS is on top of it, vis a vis setting and implementing best parliamentary research practices</i>	Rob Clement, former Director Research UK House of Commons, March 2016 in Jordan, Amman
2016	<i>Amazing facilities and wonderful work to strengthen the work of parliament and make democracy better in Pakistan.</i>	Willson Lee (September 19, 2016)

	<i>Congratulation and please keep up the great work!</i>	
2016	<i>Thank you for the opportunity to visit PIPS and to congratulate about the high performance achieved by PIPS for the noble cause of democracy and rule of law.</i>	Oum Sarith, Secretary General of Senate of Cambodia (November 16, 2016)
2017	<i>Narrative of Peace and Tolerance well written</i>	Honorable Senator Nisar Memon
2017	<i>All-encompassing and Well written papers</i>	National Security Adviser Mr Janjua on PIPS thematic paper for Regional Speakers Conference, Dec 2017
2017	<i>PIPS budget analysis services for MPs and programmes on Youth engagement with Parliament are remarkable initiatives</i>	Honorable MNA Ms Shahida Akhter Ali
2017	<i>All PIPS publications are thorough and very relevant to any parliamentary institution or House</i>	Honorable Speakers Balochistan and GBLA, 2017 during National SDGs Moot, 2018
2017	<i>Parliament@70 initiative absorbing and impressive research services to assist MPs and committees work.</i>	Dr Lambert and Dr Wahler, former Speaker of the German Bundestag and Secretary General Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, respectively during their visit to PIPS
July 2017	<i>Thank you for your warm hospitality and very informative knowledge. PIPS is very excellent organization. I really appreciate how you work for parliamentary excellence. Thank you very much</i>	Thawilwadee Bureekel, King Prajadhipok's Institute, Thailand (July 27-28, 2017)
2018	<i>PIPS is passionate about Parliamentary work in the country; it is indeed great support through its research, legislative and capacity building initiatives</i>	Honorable Senator Shahzad Waseem, Oct., 2018)
2018	The institute has provided me a great deal of assistance in field of legislation. The legislative team of PIPS helped me in drafting several Bills, out of which four were passed by the Senate and three of those became Acts of Parliament.	Honorable Senator Karim Khwaja
April 2018	<i>Legislative support by PIPS amazing</i>	Honorable Senator Sehar Kamran
2018	<i>Found PIPS Research papers much relevant as compared to NDU and others</i>	Honorable MNA Jaffer Iqbal on an international conference on security and anti terrorism)
2018	<i>PIPS legislative and research support means so much to me</i>	Honorable MNA Shehryar Afridi and now State Minister for Interior, at Constitution day April 10, 2018
2018	<i>Research Digest raising absorbing issues</i>	I.A Rehman in The Dawn Newspaper
Sept 2018	<i>PIPS is a world class centre for excellence producing extra ordinary parliamentary publications and legislative researches.</i>	Hon. Seishiro Eto, Member House of Representatives, former Vice Speaker, Japan, during visit and interacting with PIPS team.
October 2018	<i>PIPS is passionate about Parliamentary work in the country; it is indeed great support through its research, legislative and capacity building initiatives</i>	Honorable Senator Shahzad Waseem, speaking at PIPS Legislative assessment National Conference.
2018	<i>Thank you very much for your hospitality and great ideas. Very impressed with the work you are doing and look forward to working with you in the area of migration.</i>	Sedef Dearing (February 27, 2018)
2018	<i>Great academic and research contribution</i>	VC Uni. of Punjab
Nov 2018	<i>PIPS Providing so many research services and contributing so</i>	Secretary General King Prajadhipok's

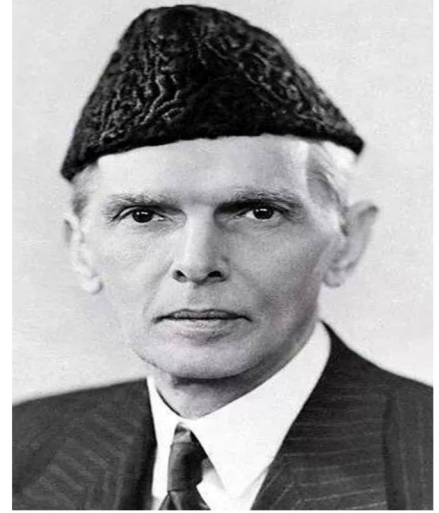
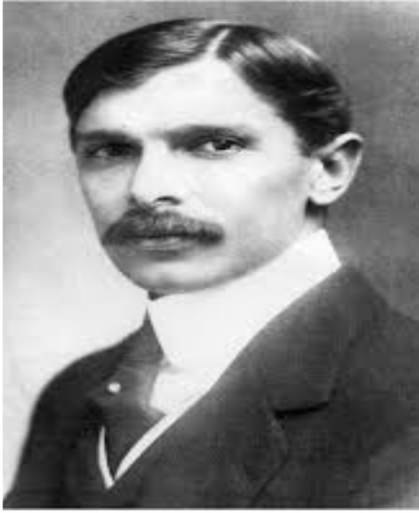
	<i>many books in short span great achievement</i>	Institute, Thailand, Prof Woothisarn Tenchai at 20 th anniversary conference Nov., 2018
2019	<i>It was wonderful experience to visit PIPS where a great deal of work is done to improve democracy. Add value to the parliamentary system. Thank you for this opportunity.</i>	J. K. Ananda Kumarasiri (July 31, 2019) Deputy Speaker Sri Lankan Parliament
2019	<i>Whenever there is a legal issue for which a solution is required, PIPS team is there to provide most viable solutions.</i>	The then Honorable State Minister for Narcotics Control, Mr. Shehryar Khan Afridi
Jan 03, 2020	<i>Hon. Minister for Narcotics control, Mr. Shehryar Khan Afridi, held a meeting with Prime Minister of Pakistan and informed him about a new initiative by his Ministry in assistance with PIPS, titled: The Drug Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Regulation Bill, 2019. The Prime Minister posted a tweet in this regard on his official twitter account.</i>	Honorable Minister for Narcotics Control, Mr. Shehryar Khan Afridi, January 03, 2020
2020	<i>PIPS Research Digest is quite useful and informative</i>	Honorable Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed
June 2020	<i>Thank you very much PIPS Budget Desk for preparing and providing a wonderful Budget Analysis in short period of time and for organizing a webinar on short notice to our request. I, on behalf of Balochistan Assembly greatly thankful to PIPS Team and highly appreciate the wonderful and untiring support.</i>	Honorable Sardar Babar Khan, Deputy Speaker Balochistan Assembly, June 25, 2020
2020	<i>Legislative drafting is a highly technical field and its experts are hard to find in Pakistan. Main objective of National and Provincial Assemblies is legislation and PIPS is the right place where legislative team diligently provides assistance to Parliamentarians.</i>	Honorable Ms. Uzma Kardar, MPA, Provincial Assembly of Punjab
June 2020	<i>Thank you very much PIPS Team for the wonderful and active support on technical subject of Annual Budget. I found it very professional and committed to entertain my queries and questions.</i>	Honorable MNA Rana Sanaullah, June 24, 2020
June 2020	<i>I highly appreciate PIPS Budget Desk for providing overwhelming support on Budget that assisted me to participate well during the Budget Session through active participation and speech</i>	Honorable MNA Ch. Faqir Ahmed, June 22, 2020
2020	<i>Thanks PIPS Team for excellent and timely support during the Budget Session. The way you translated my required budget areas into Urdu for my better understanding and Assembly speech is highly appreciable.</i>	Honorable MPA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Tufail Anjum
June 26, 2020	<i>Thanks PIPS Team for being always actively available to support us in House business. Especially, I highly appreciate and acknowledge the wonderful support on Budget.</i>	Honorable MNA Saad Waseem.
2020	<i>Comprehensive presentation and comparative research paper by PIPS at the National Public Accounts Committee identifies imperative areas of reform.</i>	Mr. Qamar Sohail Lodhi, Special Secretary NA during meeting of the PAC at the National Assembly of Pakistan.
2020	<i>PIPS has produced entire curriculum on all conceptual Parliamentary areas, which facilitates capacity building initiatives.</i>	Mr Mushtaq Ahmad – Addl Secretary National Assembly

**Team PIPS is humbled by the candid feedback on research and legislative initiatives of PIPS and above words of appreciation remain source of great inspiration to further continue our zeal to serve the Parliament and make PIPS an international seat of learning dedicated to parliamentary excellence. Please feel free to send further feedback on our services at research@pips.gov.pk*

GLIMPSES OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE ROLE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNT
COMMITTEES, SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2020



REMEMBERING QUAID-E-AZAM MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH ON HIS 72ND DEATH ANNIVERSARY



“Those days have gone when the country was ruled by the bureaucracy. It is people’s Government, responsible to the people more or less on democratic lines and parliamentary practice....Make the people feel that you are their servants and friends, maintain the highest standard of honour, integrity, justice and fairplay”.

Quaid’s message for ‘Civil Servants’ at Chittagong on March 25, 1948



PAKISTAN INSTITUTE FOR PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES
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Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services was established in Dec 2008 through an act of the Parliament to promote research, provide training and to provide facility of information to the Parliamentarians in performance of their duties and for matters connected therewith and ancillary thereto.

PIPS team endeavors to serve the Parliament through its cherished values of :

Integrity, professionalism, non-partisanship, accessibility and anticipation

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