

# PM Visit: Trade and Economic Cooperation

The three day visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan seems to have struck a chord and both President Donald Trump and PM Imran Khan have found some common grounds to move forward on. This week's summit talks turned out to be a positive initiative from both the sides as they kept aside their bitterness and grievances. This meeting broke the ice and both the countries are now back on the track to have bilateral relations. Pakistan's President visit to the United States was not only a good step to the outer world but was a good indicator for Pakistan's economy too.

The talks revolved around four different subjects including peace process in Afghanistan, Kashmir issue between two contending rivals India and Pakistan, regional security and fostering trade and economic relations. Trump on Monday also hinted at the possibility of restoring about \$13 billion aid to Pakistan that was suspended in 2018. Outcomes of these talks indicate that the bilateral ties between both the countries will grow in the near future. However, the US is dangling the possibility of stronger trade and economic relations with Pakistan if it helps with the peace talks in Afghanistan and do more to crack down on terrorism within its borders.

Investment and economic cooperation were of more prime concern than the renewal of the US aid to Pakistan. Because the US has been Pakistan's important development, investment and trade partner and Pakistan's second largest export market after European Union with total trade of \$6.627 billion during FY 2018-19 and over \$1.5 billion worth of investment. Moreover, The American President also showed interest in raising the US investment and expanding trade relations with Pakistan.

Acknowledging that there have been ups and downs in Pakistan – U.S relations Pakistan is looking forward to discover ways and means to deepen its economic relations with Washington through a constructive and positive approach. This cooperation will be beneficial for both the countries. Pakistan is expecting US engagement in the areas such as economy and finance, energy, science and technology as well as agriculture. These areas have the potential to build up long-term economic growth, stability and human development.

Indeed, this three day visit to Washington has helped to soften Pakistan's relations with the US. Now is the time when the US investors must convince their potential investors to invest in Pakistan and should transfer the latest technology to Pakistan. Moreover, Pakistan should focus more on its private sector by providing all kinds of support and skills to boost its exports.

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## **A Fresh Start – Pak-USA Relations**

*By Zara Qurban*

Pakistan and USA relationships have been nothing but a series of roller-coaster rides, there were fluctuations and vacillation. Currently, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan is at the White House where he was given warm welcome by the USA President Trump and both the leaders shook hands. PM of Pakistan has had meetings with Trump administration to bring Pak-USA relations on good terms. This is PM's first ever visit since he came into power but it is quite evident to the whole world that the acrimony has dwindled and the two leaders are

having meaningful exchange of remarks regarding Afghanistan and Kashmir issue.

While addressing Afghanistan issue Trump remarked that if USA wanted to fight a war and win then Afghanistan would have been wiped off the face of earth in ten days but USA does not want that and he went on saying that he has good vibes coming from PM Imran Khan that he will help USA get out of Afghanistan to save millions of lives in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. Trump said that, unfortunately, past leadership in Pakistan was not putting enough effort in resolving the issues which made the relations bitter and dry. In following remarks Trump said that it wants to bring Afghanistan into a political process and that Pakistan should help USA to achieve that like they have been trying to bring Taliban on negotiation table.

Afghanistan was never a Pakistan's war but it participated to bring peace and security to the region. War on terror has cost Pakistan its reputation in the international community, 70,000 innocent lives, billions of dollars, law and order, economy and most importantly its peace and security. PM Imran Khan said it loud that there no military solution to Afghanistan, only political solution can save the lives and economies on both sides. The efforts of Pakistan in continuing peace process between Afghanistan and USA was also recognized by Trump and PM Imran Khan showed consent and willingness to cooperate more in putting control over militancy.

Following the Afghanistan issue came the most important issue between India and Pakistan: Kashmir. PM Imran Khan said that Pakistan has tried numerous times to resolve the issue through dialogues and without any bloodshed but India's rigid behavior is making it impossible. Trump offered mediation and facilitation to end this issue and that Modi made the request to resolve the issue but right after this comment India's representative denied any placement of requests for USA to be the mediator. India is still failing to realize that the only meaningful solution to the Kashmir issue is dialogues, not

coercive measures or violence.

So far the meeting is being looked upon as a great effort to reset the pace of Pakistan-USA relations, both the leaders have appreciated each other and many topics are being discussed under serious note to ensure peace in the region. Pakistan has showed its willingness to have better relations based on trust and truth with USA to move forward and redesign the bilateral relationships.