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THE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF DONALD TRUMP'S BULLYING TWEETS TO PAKISTAN

Abstract

The present paper aims to analyze the Tweets of US president Donald Trump meant for Islamabad. PaK-US relations had been volatile characterized by the absolute absence of stability. Most significantly mistrust and animosity dominated diplomatic ties of Islamabad and Washington. Recently, with occupancy of the presidency by Donald Trump as a 45th president on 20th January 2017 by succeeding US president Barack Obama, Mr. Trump set on pouring messages through his frequent tweets; which were interpreted in a variant way by editorials of different newspapers. Accordingly, in order of plumb undercurrent bias-ness and predilection of the newspapers, two international i.e., the Washington Post and the New York Times and three national newspapers e.g., the Daily Dawn, the Roznama Duniya and the Sindh Express were purposively sampled. However, the total size of the chosen editorials were thirty-seven predicating a brief time series ranging from 2017 to 2018, of which there were three English and two Urdu newspapers. Method of Content Analysis was employed to examine the data. As a result, the international newspaper e.g., the Washington Post and the Daily Times were composed in treatment of both countries the States and Pakistan so did the Daily Dawn. On the contrary, the regional newspapers of Pakistan, such as the Roznama Duniya and the Sindh Express adopted a partial attitude in dealing with PaK-US affairs demonstrated by xenophobia towards Pakistan versus the States.

***Key Words:** Content, analysis, tweets, patriotism, affairs*

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Diplomatic relations of Pakistan and the United States of America are often labeled as a game of roller coaster. In the 70-year, the life span of Pakistan, there was a time when Pakistan was treated like a baby sister of America, but within weeks and months that affection and affinity turned into extreme animosity and hostility. Both Pakistan and the US shared a chequered history in terms of social, economic and political and military relations. During cold war era, Pakistan was mounted a Privileged Member of US-led anti-Soviet alliance, e.g., Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization or Baghdad Pact (CENTO). To the utter disappointment of Pakistan, she was left in the lurch by the US by withholding all sorts of military support during wars of 1965 and 1971. Again, in the 1980s in wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan was introduced as *the Most Allied Ally*. No sooner did the Soviet Union make a strategic withdrawal from Afghanistan than the US began questioning Pakistan's nuclear program. On account of this, the *Pressler* amendment was clamped down on Pakistan. Once again, after the tragic incident of 9/11, Pakistan was endowed with the status of *a Front-Line State* in the war on terror. Similarly, American anti-Pakistan rage spiked as that war on terror was coming to an end for nothing. Overall, the officials of US administration often threatened Pakistan with dire consequences in one- or another way around. But, that time the president of the US Donald Trump had adopted a coercive means of settlement by posting anti-Pakistan tweets to provoke Pakistani administration. Since the occupancy of the presidency, he tweeted against Pakistan thrice. His tweets were inked in anger, warnings, and threats. His threatening tweets captured extensive coverage in print

as well as electronic media in both countries. Print media covered these tweets and threats from different gamut. The print media coverage of Trump's tweets was treated differently in both countries. It influenced foreign policy and diplomatic ties in both countries. The newspapers employed different languages in their editorials and articles. The images of the US government, Donald Trump, Pakistani military and civilian leaders were portrayed unfairly in public of two countries. In short, the US and Pakistani print media not only exaggerated the facts but also presented those facts in twisted forms in utter violation of ethics of journalism. This paper aims to present an unbiased and factual analysis of the implications of Trump's tweets and the nature of its print media coverage.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

i. To investigate how Trump's statements were taken in Pakistani print media.
ii. To determine how print media influences the process of foreign policy making in two governments.

1.2. Problem Statement

Media exaggerated the facts and twisted the stories in an influenced manner to aggravate the strained diplomatic PaK-US ties. The one-sided and partial media coverage of Trump's statements and tweets had further severed Pak-US relations. It triggered anti-American feelings in Pakistan and vice versa. To put it differently, sentimentalism and aggression transcended impartiality, neutrality, and truth. Additionally, the language of the newspapers' editorials is sarcastic and venomous aiming at spreading instability and hatred among the public of PaK-US.

1.3 Research Gap

There is sizable research done on the subject, particularly qualitative one (Content Analysis) to investigate editorials of both national and international newspapers with respect to the tweets of Donald Trump and its developments on PaK-US diplomatic ties. Thus, it was imperative to gain an empathetic understanding by assessing and examining the editorials of the selected newspapers.

1.4 Scope of the Study

1.4.1. Thematic Scope

Thematic scope deals with political and diplomatic proportions of PaK-US relations.

1.4.2. Geographic Scope

The study was conducted across two diverse regions/continents.

1.5. *Justification of the Study*

The proposed study is based on a sizable amount of qualitative research on the topic in question. Thus, it was imperative to investigate the precipitously spiking political crisis between Pakistan and the US by offering an in-depth understanding of the study through a review of editorials of the chosen newspapers.

1.6. Significance of the Study

The outcome of the study would prove to be very supportive source of information and data to the policymakers, think tanks, politicians, diplomats, academicians, and students of International Relations will also learn and other relevant global organizations who struggle to comprehend ever-changing Pak-US relations.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Basically, the study is exploratory in terms of mode of expression. There were several constraints, such as time, budget, and energy, coupled with a few numbers of national and international newspapers.

1. Literature Review
2.1 International Media

Jasmine and Kevin provided a list of people, newspapers and TV channels which were insulted by Mr. Trump in his reckless tweets (Lee, 2018). Likewise, Patrick Wintour and Jason Burke wrote that a variety of US diplomats around the world were summoned by multiple foreign offices around the world for formal reproach and clarification (Wintour, 2018). By the same token, Smith opined that British media highlighted the third world countries as a hopeless; and portrayed negative aspects of those countries. Trump and his Media team attacked media houses or personnel who either criticized him or raised questions on his statements and policies (Smith, 2005). Zurcher stated that even during the presidential campaign, Trump with his Media team punished the press for the treatment which he thought was unfair to him (Zurcher, 2018). Chandran stated that if Trump and

American Administration continued pressurizing Pakistani Government on the question of militant's safe havens in tribal areas of Pakistan, it may reciprocate in revenge (Chandran, 2017).

2.2. National Media

Ghulam Shabir states that the US media, especially the Washington Post and the New York Times support mostly American Administration of the day on international issues; and on the contrary, they always bolster American point of view against Pakistan (Shabir, Hussain, & Waseem, 2014). Siraj said that it was expected that American media would give a positive coverage of Pakistan; but it could not materialize as American media see other countries in light of their own foreign policies and national interests (Siraj, 2007). Sunawar pointed out that during the election campaign Trump's understanding and positioning on South Asian issues were quite ambiguous, which still continues in his dealing with this region (Sunawar, 2017). Mugees states that Western Media is representing Islam as a stereotype and violent religion which is a major cause of misunderstanding between Islam and Christianity (Sheikh, 1995).

2.3 The Rationale behind Selecting Newspapers

The *Daily Dawn* is believed to be the most authentic, unbiased and widely circulated English newspaper, thus selected as a universe of the study. It is commonly considered that this newspaper leads all other newspapers of Pakistan in shaping public opinion on any issue. *Daily Duniya Urdu* is also a reputed Urdu newspaper, giving a balanced editorial view at least about international issues. Similarly, *Sind Express Sindhi Daily* is also a widely circulated Sindhi

newspaper which plays an important role in making public opinion among Sindhi readers. The editorial contents of these all newspapers facilitated me in drawing genuine conclusions about the research questions being investigated. It is noteworthy that all these three newspapers are very instrumental in making public opinions among the readers. On the same lines, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* are also largely read daily in the States with a strong influence on the masses. These newspapers are forerunners in making and shaping public opinions on matters of national and international importance. The editorial contents of these two newspapers are taken seriously among the policymakers sitting in Oval House, Pentagon, White House, and American Congress. The selection of these two newspapers assisted me enormously in comprehending and evaluating how Trump's words are translated into actions in American power corridors.

2.4 Research Questions
1. Is Print Media coverage of Trump's tweets biased?
2. Is the language employed in editorials of the newspapers biased and irritating?
3. Is the language of Pakistani newspaper editorials spreading anti-American feelings?
4. Have the ethics of journalism been violated?
5. How does US media look at Trump's statements and tweets contrary to Pakistan?
6. How do Pakistani newspapers' editorials see America, Trump and PaK-US relations?

2.5 Hypothesis

International and national media coverage of Donald Trump's tweets is biased.

3. Research Methodology

Content analysis has been adopted as the methodology for the study. A mixed approach, consisting of quantitative and qualitative has been employed to investigate and match the outcomes of the study. The editorials of the *Daily Dawn, Daily* Urdu, and *Sindh Express Daily* are selected as a universe for Content Analysis. Mr. Trump has tweeted in contradiction of Pakistan for three times; thus, two-week editorials of the said newspapers after each tweet were selected for the study. In addition, some random editorials of the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* have also been studied in this research to know how US media views the frivolous statements of Donald Trump. The result of the data has been given in the table form. Table 1 illustrates the data in accordance with the questions asked in the paper as follows:

4. Table 1. Illustrating the content analysis of five newspapers

Name of News Papers	The Washington post	The New York Times	The Daily Dawn	The Roznama Duniya	The Sindh Express
Date	30-07-2017 02-04-2018 04-04-2018 18-01-2018	21-08-2017 23-08-2017 04-01-2018 19-11-2018 09-01-2018 05-08-2018	25-08-17 30-08-2017 02-09-2017 03-01-2018 06-01-2018 20-11-2018 28-11-2018	22-08-2017 23-08-2017 24-08-2017 25-08-2017 26-08-2017 28-08-2017 29-08-2018 31-08-2017 20-11-2018 21-11-2018 23-11-2018 28-11-2018 05-01-2018 03-01-2018 07-01-2018	25-08-2017 31-08-2017 02-01-2018 04-01-2018 06-01-2018
Number of Editorials	04 editorials	06 editorials	07 editorials	15 editorials	05 editorials
Nature of language	Language is both critical and patriotic according to issues but generally against Pakistan, especially on the question of militant factions' safe havens.	A balanced language, Pro- American as well Critical of both American and Pakistan Administration.	Balanced /Critical of Trump's threats/Imran khan's approach on WOT	Pro Pakistani language Pro Army language / Harsh language for America or Trump	Harsh language for America but less harsh than the Duniya newspaper, Language favoring Pakistan
Projection of countries	Most of the editorial and article contents project American point of view, but Trump's	Tilted towards America, but critical of trump's threats and tweets and of critical of terrorists' safe havens in Pakistan	Neutral projection of Pakistan and the US	America is negatively portrayed in all editorials/ quarrelsome approach/ Patriotic Partial	Quite patriotic, dislike for America, partiality reflected

	rhetoric criticized				
Policy changes	Policy Changes recommended in all editorials/ articles for both countries	Suggesting Policy changes to both Pakistan and America	All articles Suggest policy changes for two countries/ suggestions for reconciliations	Excessive Coverage of national security council meetings / policy changes seldom recommended	Mildly Patriotic less policy changes suggested
Portrayal of Trump	Donald Trump not projected positively	Trump not projected positively	Negative portrayal	Trump portrayed very negatively	Trump portrayed negatively
Threatening words of tweets/statements	"Pakistan stop harbor terrorists safe heavens " "change approach how to deal with Pakistan" "if Pakistan wants to remain an ally then help us achieve objectives"				
Abusive words of tweets and statements	"fools" "Damn" "foolishly" "lies" "Deceit" "Agents of chaos"				

4. Data Analysis & Discussion

4.1 *The Washington Post and New York Times*

A few editorials of newspapers' editorial boards are available in the archives of Washington Post and the New York Times. Therefore, I also studied a few other articles in the backdrop of Trump's tweets against Pakistan. The editorial boards of these papers are largely balanced in terms of the contents. They underscored the point of view of both countries, reservations of two sides and possibilities of reconciliation between them. They not only condemned fateful statements of Trump but also, they also disapproved of Pakistan's double game played with successive US administrations since the inception of War on terror. All editorials shared the US administration's concerns on the presence of Haqqani Network and other militant factions on the Pakistani side. They regarded it as one of the major causes of Taliban resurgence and their attacks on the US, NATO, and Afghan security forces. Additionally, American newspapers called it duplicity and betrayal of Pakistani governments. Furthermore, most of the editorial contents described Donald Trump's rhetoric against North Korea, China, Qatar, Iran, and Mexico, Pakistan and other countries and their leaders as illogical, ill-mannered and undiplomatic. Both newspapers strongly criticized Trump's public bashing of Pakistan through the means of tweets. They also suggested dealing with Pakistan diplomatically through dialogues and talks. Moreover, according to both newspapers South Asian policy of Trump is quite confused like his predecessors sitting in

Oval Office. Trump failed to chalk out an exact future course of action for the Afghan war or to give any exact shape and nature of victories. His latest policy is devoid of any logical exit strategy for the US and NATO soldiers. The strategy of the increasing number of US soldiers on Afghan soil failed in the past; there are enough chances of failure again. Both newspapers believe exerting excessive pressure on Pakistan is unlikely to produce any positive fruits since the similar approach of his predecessors failed ignobly. The analysis of these newspapers made it clear that though both newspapers are pro-American; but they are equally critical of Trump's abusive language and threats against world leaders and countries.

4.2 *The Daily Dawn Newspaper*

The editorials of Dawn spoke on the contents of Donald Trump's tweets and statements in true journalistic norms without taking any sides. Where it condemned the unrealistic approach of Donald Trump in dealing with US partners in WOT, it never spared Pakistani administration of the day of her faults. The *Daily Dawn* denigrated extreme positions and irrational statements of Pakistani officials against America and American President. Likewise, the daily Dawn editorials criticized Donald Trump's derides and baseless allegations against Pakistan. However, editorial censure was very calculated and impartial. These editorials focused on the negative aspects of Trump's statements. The *Daily Dawn* editorials were limited in content only. They never unleashed personal denouncement of any political figure however controversial he may be. According to the *Daily Dawn*, baseless allegations and emotional

statements are unlikely to solve problems rather likely to increase the chasm between two countries. Anti-Pakistan statements of American officials will enrage public and worsen hostile feelings by putting the government under pressure to withdraw support from the war on terror. The Daily Dawn editorials claimed that irrational tweets of Trump would not only hurt public feelings but also were likely to be exploited by religious forces here; which would ultimately go against American interests in the region.

This newspaper instead of taking partial positioning remains impartial in its all editorials. In almost all editorials, it was reminded that the Pakistani government should take pragmatic steps to mend ties with America and not to sever the relations with a superpower. It also censured knee-jerk reactions from the Pakistani sides, such as canceling the visit of the US Acting Assistant Secretary of the States, Alice to Pakistan soon after the announcement of America's South Asia strategy. The *Daily Dawn* suggested avoiding any untoward collision with US administration on the issues of South Asia policy or alleged safe havens of terrorism inside Pakistan. In addition to it, the *Daily Dawn* editorials always underscored the significance of diplomacy and dialogue for settlement of bilateral conflicts. These editorials always put stress on peaceful settlement of issues and meaningful engagement with US governments. It did not approve the postponement of US visit of foreign minister, Khuwaja Asif and his meeting with US secretary of the States, Rex Tillerson soon after the announcement of South Asia strategy of Trump.

Similarly, according to the editorials of *Daily Dawn*, Donald Trump's anti-Pakistan gibes, threats and policies are

unlikely to yield any pragmatic results for America. These tweets and threats would further aggravate the situation and would fan the fire. Trump's accusations and abuses not only discomforted government officials but also enraged the public at large. Its backlash was largely manifested in anti-America rallies and demonstrations across Pakistan. The protests were mostly led by the local leaders of Jamat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and Difa-e Pakistan council religious parties. Most notably, the *Daily Dawn* in its editorial of 06th January 2018 states that the American decision of suspending military grants would enable Pakistan to wash away the allegations of joining the war on terror in lieu of money. The suspension of security assistance will make Pakistan depend on her own financial resources by expanding tax net and reducing extravagance. In follow up to recent tirade of Trump against Pakistan, editorials of daily Dawn not only lambasted language of Trump but also disapproved of Prime Minister Imran Khan's stand that the war on terror was not our own war and Pakistan should not have participated in the war. The *Daily Dawn* rather believed that Pakistan is fighting this war for its own survival. The *Daily Dawn* holds that Imran Khan's opinion on the war in Afghanistan is wrong-headed, and his outlook on the war against terrorism, militancy, and extremism inside Pakistan is reckless. In the case of the Daily Dawn, it is concluded that this very impartial newspaper gives neutral editorial contents, encompassing all aspects of the story without any agenda.

4.3 *Daily Duniya Newspaper*

The Editorials of daily Duniya were found quite partial and tilted toward Pakistan. By large, these editorials contained the government's point of view; ignored American arguments in their editorial content. Many of the editorials were filled with an extreme sense of patriotic sentiments and nationalism. The language used for America and Donald Trump was utterly sarcastic and hateful. The criticism of US policies, actions and threats prevailed in almost all editorials. Moreover, many editorial instead of focusing on newspaper points of view on Trump's tweets or threats either stated statements of Pakistani politicians, opposition leaders, government officials or incorporated related stories events in editorials. Most importantly, the very first paragraph of each editorial appeared like a press release or hand out of one or another event or meeting. For example, the editorial of 4th January 2018 contained discussion and announcements of the meeting of National Security adviser, Nasir Janjua's and Chinese ambassador held on the previous day. Similarly, the first paragraph of 5th January 2018 covered Pak Army Chief's visit to South Waziristan. Likewise, 3rd January 2018 editorial reflected the output of a national security council.

Moreover, editorials of *Dunya* newspaper not only censured the American point of view but also stressed the sacrifices of Pakistan in the war on terror. It was also highlighted that America ignored Pakistan's causalities in War on terror, logistic supply, air space and other facilities rendered in this war. These editorials projected China as a close friend of Pakistan; whereas, America as an unreliable ally. Furthermore, the statements of Pakistani Army chief are given more coverage than the statements of civilian leaders in the editorials of *Dunya* newspaper. Most of the editorials underscored the military point of view in detail with more stress on military sacrifices. These editorials not only favored China but also held contemptible views for India. American support and love for India; the increasing Indian role in Afghanistan in WOR was regarded as hostile to Pakistani interests in Afghanistan; and is a major source of hostility in PaK-US relations. Not only Pakistan's sacrifices, such as loss of blood, destruction of infrastructure and destabilization of the economy due to partnership in WOT, were extremely admired but also American ignorance of all the above-said realities and reckless statements of American military and civilian leaders were the point of discussion in these editorials.

4.4 *Sindh Express*

The editorials of the Sindh Express newspaper also support the Pakistani government's stand almost on all issues related to America. Express editorials are also inked in colors of patriotism, thus, devoid of impartial journalistic norms. Strong partiality and imbalance in favor of Pakistan were analyzed in several editorials. These editorials also criticized

Donald Trump for his irritating tweets and statements against Pakistan. His tweets and threats were dubbed as a deliberate violation of settled diplomatic norms. They further highlighted human and material sacrifices of Pakistan rendered in the War on Terror. In these editorials, US ignorance of Pakistan's financial and human losses was severely censured. These editorials were equally critical of the pro-Indian approach of America, especially discussed in the new South Asia policy of Trump. This newspaper always gave a logical and organized reply to Trump's tweets in light of historical facts and figures. It was also suggested that the incumbent government should take all national political parties on board at these critical hours of the nation. In various editorials, it was suggested to strongly engage with Russia and China by gradually reducing our dependence on America as it has no respect for Pakistan's national security and interests. Almost every edition of this paper castigated the US blames of providing safe havens to militants. In a nutshell, the editorials of this newspaper were pro-Pakistan and thus ignored the American point of view in any editorials.

4.5 *The Media Portrayal of Trump* Hardly any American president has received such negative media coverage as did by Donald Trump. Almost all newspapers and TV channels projected him a headless and unsound president devoid of sense. His statements are mocked. His tweets are re-tweeted with a tinge of harsh criticism and abuse. According to a report, 91 percent of American TV networks describe him negatively (Wemple, 2017). Majority of news networks ABC, CBC, and NBC project Donald Trump negatively. Most of the newspapers painted him in dark colors. His statements, especially on some important issues like healthcare, Mexican wall, global warming and Russian involvement in the US elections were severely criticized. It was also believed that a variety of new networks aired him not for the sake of promotion but for targeting him (Noyes, 2017). The absolute objective of their excessive coverage of Trump was to ridicule him in one or another way. In fact, in his first 100 days in office, no other US president grew such tremendous coverage as received by Trump. He grabbed 41 percent of the overall media coverage, which is three times more than received by his predecessors in office in first 100 days. Interestingly, all news networks and newspapers covered him negatively except Fox News which gave some positive coverage (Noyes & Ciandella, Honeymoon from Hell: The Liberal Media vs. President Trump, 2017). Similarly, Pakistani newspapers also projected Trump as an irrational headless, whimsical and capricious leader. He was

considered as hostile toward Pakistan. Pakistani media views him through the lenses of India as the president is tilted towards India and hostile towards Pakistan. His pro-Indian statements and policies create a sense of suspicion and dissatisfaction in the public.

4.6 *Summary*

The study investigated basic questions: The editorials of *Sindh Express*, *Duniya Urdu* daily, the *Daily Dawn* English, the *Washington Post,* and the *New York Times* were explored. One-week Editorials of these newspapers immediately after Trump's threat to Pakistan were studied, which unveiled various facts. It was obvious the language of almost all Urdu editorials was unfavorable to Donald Trump. He was portrayed as violent head of state in most of the newspapers. *Daily Dunya* Urdu and *Sindh Express* vehemently criticized the foreign policy approach of Trump and new US administration. The editorials of *Duniya* newspaper observed like a mouth-piece of Pakistan. Anti-Americanism and feelings of hostility were overflowing from their editorial contents. On the contrary, the *Daily Dawn* English was an unbiased newspaper with impartial editorial contents, suggesting rational policy changes in both sides. It treated both Pakistan and American sides equally by asking both to demonstrate sense, harmony, and reconciliation, buried hatches and settled the dispute with harmony. The *Daily Dawn* editorials firmly held their journalistic values by being nonpartisan. Similarly,

the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* also stuck to journalistic values by presenting a true side of the story. They not only censured the presence of Haqqani Network on Pakistani soil but also, disapproved undiplomatic statements of Mr. Trump. Furthermore, there is a marked difference in the coverage of Trump and his statements in Sindhi, Urdu and English newspapers of both countries. Urdu and Sindhi newspapers were more hostile than the English newspapers.

5. Conclusion

Donald Trump is notorious for positing antagonistic tweets. Pakistan has always remained a point of criticism. However, his rhetoric narrative was exaggerated in print media. Pakistani newspapers like *Dunya Urdu* and *Sindh Express* went too far in criticism of Trump for his bullying tweets to Pakistan. The newspapers published over-sentimental articles and editorials which went a long way in straining the relationship between the two countries. Resultantly, their relationship fell to the lowest ebb. There was no any impartiality found in the editorials. Predisposed and aggressive language was used in a typically twisted form. It gave the impression that journalistic norms have been sacrificed at the podium of patriotism. Nonetheless, the *Daily Dawn* seemed to be quite responsible in presenting facts and figures and unbiased points of view. They demonstrated perfect professionalism by suggesting peace, harmony, and dialogue over conflicts and taunts. American leading newspapers *the New York Times* and *the Washington Post* also

followed journalistic norms by focusing on real causes of conflicts and their solutions. After reading various editorials, it can safely be concluded that Donald Trump's statements not only harmed PaK-US relations but also provided religious elements an excuse for isolating America and renewing its ties with China, Russia, and brotherly Muslim states. The leading American newspapers blindly ignored Pakistan's sacrifices in war on terror. The financial losses of Pakistan have never been counted. Ignorance of Pakistan's sacrifices in war on terror by American newspapers undervalued Pakistan's significance in the American public and incited anti-Pakistan feelings. Likewise, the negative portrayal of Trump and Pakistan in Pakistani papers dented US interests here in Pakistan. It has been therefore recommended that the newspapers of both nations should uphold true journalistic norms and play a positive role in reducing the trust gap between them.

5.1. Recommendations

All the researchers are recommended to go through standard newspapers for the sake of research on official statements and tweets made by any important incumbent. Impartiality of newspapers greatly helps to develop a reasoned judgment and reach pragmatic conclusions by surfing and searching different pages of books and papers. Research should be done in a way that could become helpful for policymaking diplomatic circles, thinkers and future researchers.

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