



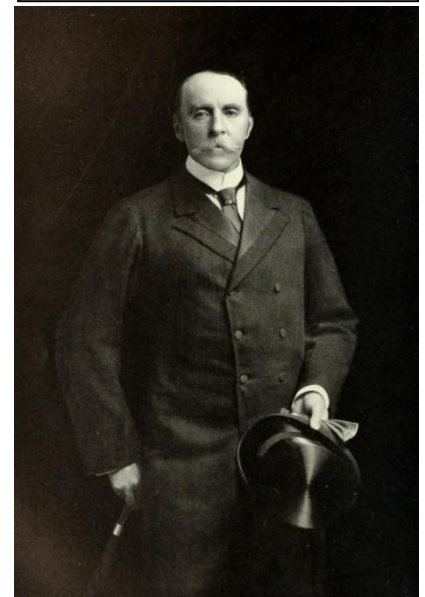
Durand Line Conflict to Continue

Prepared by Tal Shiar Intelligence Analysis Directorate

The Durand Line, established in 1893 by Sir Mortimer Durand, will remain a flashpoint for violent clashes between Afghanistan and Pakistan, with significant skirmishes reported in early October 2025. Since the Taliban's 2021 overthrow of the Afghan government, cross-border tensions have escalated due to disputes over the border's legitimacy, smuggling, and militant safe havens. No Kabul government since Pakistan's establishment in 1947 has formally recognized the Durand Line as the international boundary and the current Taliban regime is unlikely to do as well, perpetuating bilateral tensions for the near future.

- In 1893, Sir Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary of British India, negotiated the Durand Line Agreement with Amir Abdur Rahman Khan in Kabul to demarcate the frontier between Afghanistan and British India.
- The agreement codified the loss of approximately 40,000 square kilometers of Afghan territory, representing nearly one-third of Afghanistan's land, to British-India during the Anglo-Afghan Wars.. The concessions included Quetta, Peshawar, Khyber, Kurram, Waziristan, and much of Afghanistan's eastern Pashtun tribal belt.
- Following the Third Anglo-Afghan War, the Treaty of Rawalpindi in 1919 led Afghan Emir Amanullah Khan to accept prior border arrangements with British India, including the Durand Line as the international border. However, Afghanistan later contested this recognition, and upon Pakistan's establishment in 1947, the Afghan government rejected the treaty as void, laying claim to the Pashtun areas.

Sir Mortimer Durant



Pakistan Unlikely to Make Concessions to the Treaty

Islamabad will continue to exert military, political, and economic pressure on the Taliban regime to enforce recognition of the Durand Line, which it views as the international border. A ceasefire may halt major fighting but is unlikely to resolve the underlying dispute, as neither side is expected to make meaningful concessions. The Pakistan Military (PAKMIL) will continue conducting targeted airstrikes inside Afghanistan against anti-Pakistani militants (APM) and will deploy the Frontier Corps (FC) for operations along the border.

- Despite a historically cooperative relationship with Pakistan since the mid-1990s, the Taliban leadership continues to provide a safe haven to the TTP and similar groups, to conduct cross-border attacks. The Taliban likely views these groups as allies capable of expanding influence in Pakistan's tribal areas and undermining the legitimacy of the Durand Line.
- The Taliban regime has sought to expand ties with India, antagonizing Pakistan, which perceives this as encirclement. Pakistan has long accused India of using its diplomatic facilities in Afghanistan, particularly consulates along the border, to support groups like the TTP.
- Since the Taliban's 2021 overthrow of the Afghan government, over 1,500 Pakistani security personnel have been killed by TTP-like groups operating from Afghanistan with impunity, as the Taliban have refused to curtail their activities.



Conclusion

The violence along the Durand Line is unlikely to be resolved without bilateral recognition or international mediation. Neither side is expected to make significant concessions in the near term due to ongoing tensions. The Taliban regime cannot neutralize PAKMIL's advantages in air power and conventional military strength, nor reduce its reliance on trade with Pakistan, but will likely persist in supporting cross-border militant activities. Pakistan will adopt a measured approach to avoid military overreach, international pressure, and pushback from local populations, particularly in tribal areas sympathetic to the Taliban.

Notable incidents between Afghanistan and Pakistan Along Durand Line

Year	Incident Description	Casualties (Estimated)	Key Details/Source
1947	Afghanistan votes against Pakistan's UN membership over Durand Line dispute	None (diplomatic)	Afghanistan was the only country to oppose Pakistan's admission, claiming the line invalid; inherited from British India
1949	Afghan Loya Jirga repudiates Durand Line; initial border skirmishes begin	Unknown	Afghanistan declares the line invalid; leads to periodic incursions and ambassador recalls in 1948-49
1950-1951	Border clashes in Bajaur region	Dozens	Afghan-backed tribes fight Pakistani forces; sets precedent for disputes
1960-1961	Major diplomatic crisis; relations severed over Pashtunistan claims	Several in skirmishes	Propaganda warfare, border incidents, and economic harassment; relations restored in 1963
1973-1975	Tensions under Daoud regime supporting Pashtunistan	Unknown	Proxy support for separatists leads to border frictions
2003	Clashes over border posts	Several	Pakistani and Afghan forces clash amid fencing attempts
2007	Start of intensified skirmishes series	Ongoing casualties	Frequent firefights begin, driven by militancy and fencing
2013	Goshta district clashes	Dozens	Artillery exchanges over territorial claims (Various reports, e.g., WION News)

2016	Torkham border clash	4+ killed	Gunfire over gate construction; closes crossing
2017	Chaman border shooting	50+ civilians/military	Dispute over census leads to shelling
2022 (Dec)	Chaman area attack by Afghan forces	Several civilians	Border post attacks; closure of crossing
2023 (Sep)	Kurram district escalation	15+	Artillery exchanges amid incursions (Reuters via previous; WION)
2024 (Apr)	Pakistani airstrikes in Khost; retaliatory clashes	8+	Targeting militants; sparks firefights
2024 (Dec)	Afghan strikes cross Durand Line	19 Pakmil	Capture of posts; response to Pakistani airstrikes
2025 (Early)	Multiple clashes (12 reported)	Dozens	Ongoing airstrikes and reprisals
2025 (Oct+)	Heavy border clashes	20+ Pakmil Soldiers	Firing along 2,600 km line; sovereignty violations claimed



Tal Shiar was founded by Nadeem Iqbal, a national security expert who served over 16 years as an intelligence officer for the Department of Defense from 2006-2022. His career began as a counter-insurgency analyst on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Task Force (2006–2013), followed by 9 years as a military analyst in the Syria Branch (2013–2022). He deployed five times in support of combat operations (3× Afghanistan, 2× Iraq), including two rotations with

Special Operations Forces focused on counter-terrorism missions in the CENTCOM theater. Additional roles included rotations to CIA Headquarters as the military analyst for the DNI Middle East Task Force and served as the Syria Country Director for Office of Secretary of Defense Policy (OSDP). He was recognized with Joint Civilian Commendation/Achievement Medals, the NATO Medal(x3), the Secretary of Defense GWOT Medal, DoD Expeditionary Award and the OSD Excellence Award.