CONFLICT AND COOPERATION IN SOUTH ASIA:

Role of Major Powers

Islamabad Policy Research Institute

Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia: Role of Major Powers

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Acronyms

AAGC	Asia-Africa Growth Corridor
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
APAPPS	Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity
APEDA	Agricultural and Process Food Products Export Development Authority
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BECA	Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CBMs	Confidence Building Measures
CCCC	China Communications and Construction Company
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States

CISMOA	Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement
COMCASA	Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement
COPHC	China Overseas Ports Holding Company
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CSCD	Committee on Studies for Cooperation in Development
CSD	Cold Start Doctrine
CSF	Coalition Support Fund
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
DTTI	Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (US-India)
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EU	European Union
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FPCRF	Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPA	Gwadar Port Authority

GSOMIA	General Security Of Military Information Agreement
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSTC	International North-South Transport Corridor
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
IWT	Indus Waters Treaty
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
LEMOA	Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement
LoC	Line of Control
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAFTA	North Atlantic Free Trade Area
NAM	Non-Alignment Movement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NDMA	Non-Discriminatory Market Access
NGA	National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group

NSS	National Security Strategy
NWS	Nuclear Weapons States
QDR	Quadrennial Defence Review
QSD/Quad	Quadrilateral Security Dialogue
RSCT	Regional Security Complex Theory
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
TAPI	Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India
TNWs	Tactical Nuclear Weapons
TTP	Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
USMCA	United States Mexico Canada Agreement
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction

Brig. (R) Mehboob Qadir, Khurram Abbas & Adeel Mukhtar Mirza

Background

With a total population of around 1.89 billion, South Asia is the most populous region in the world. It enjoys a unique strategic location being situated on the confluence of West, Central and South East Asia. The region offers enormous economic potential, with overall regional economic growth estimated at 7.1 per cent in 2018 by the World Bank. Similarly, it stands second only to the East Asia and Pacific region in terms of global economic growth. Despite this, the region is plagued with various inter-state and intra-state conflicts such as territorial disputes, terrorism, insurgency, secessionism etc. These conflicts have inhibited regional political, economic and security cooperation.

Due to immense significance of its unique geostrategic location, geoeconomic potential and effects on territorial disputes, South Asia has witnessed great powers' contest since the Cold War era, which resulted in the formation of alliances and coalitions to serve their common objectives. In October 2001, the US intervened in Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban regime, and later announced its 'Pivot to Asia' policy.

Even in the post-Cold War era, the entire region remains important due to the Afghan war, traditional security threats, emerging non-traditional security challenges, increased risks of being a nuclear flashpoint and rising middle class that can translate into the largest consumer market of the world. The role of major powers - the United States (US), Russia and China – therefore, remains very critical in shaping the regional dynamics of South Asia.

These two developments were meant to curb terrorism in the region, and contain China and Russia. Moreover, the US strengthened its bilateral relations with India to promote it as a counterpoise to China. The US maintains that this strategy may check the emerging economic and security alliances such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). However, this strategy has been criticised by South Asian countries as it will alter the balance of power in the region.

On the other hand, Russia seems to be re-asserting itself in the wake of Indo-US strategic alliance and post-NATO drawdown vacuum in Afghanistan, which compelled Moscow to play its role in minimising the consequences of the Afghan war on the Central Asian Republics (CARs). Russia is also diversifying its relationship with South Asian countries, including Pakistan. Its interests are mainly to expand its arms markets, fight against terrorism and disrupt the domino effects of separatism and radicalism in Central Asia.

China has deep economic interests in South Asia. Under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the country has visualised two major economic corridors in South Asia, i.e., China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM). The progress of CPEC seems satisfactory as majority early harvest projects have been completed. However, the future of BCIM hangs in the balance due to

India's rejection of BRI in general and BCIM in particular. China wants to achieve a delicate balance in its relations with India. It neither wants to maintain a hostile relationship nor see India as a stronger power that can challenge Beijing's rise. Therefore, despite some border issues, China is pursuing robust economic bilateral cooperation with India. In Afghanistan, China is investing in the mineral exploration sector as well as helping the Afghan government in the reconstruction of infrastructure and security sphere. Pakistan-China relations, on the other hand, are rooted in mutual trust. Both countries have deep cooperation in diplomatic, economic, and security areas and coordinate their stances at various global foras, particularly at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

With this backdrop, the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) organised a two-day international conference on *Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia: Role of Major Powers* in December 2018. Renowned national and international experts participated in the conference as speakers. This book is based on the views expressed by eminent scholars from the US, Russia, China and Pakistan. The aim of the conference was to map out major powers' strategic interests given the fluid environment of cooperation and conflict in South Asia. The conference was divided into four academic sessions, along with the inaugural and concluding session.

Session Summaries

Role of Major Powers in South Asia

Dr Ahmed Ijaz Malik, Assistant Professor at the School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan, looked at US' footprint in South Asia. He stressed that the nature of post-Cold War multipolarity demands that the US should reassess its interests and

engage with the other powers and regional states, especially for conflict resolution and promotion of regional trade.

The evidences of multipolarity in current international relations accentuate the need for minimising incidents of war, promoting negotiations to resolve conflicts and initiating trade between developing states.

Describing the US role in South Asia, he stated that the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) between the US and India is expected to develop a geostrategic partnership with India's defence industrial base and promote business ties between the two defence industries. India is developing its defence industrial base through an indigenous production programme called 'Make in India' with the US support of technology transfer projects. It will have adverse implications on South Asia, undermining strategic stability and pushing the region into an arms race. He further stated that China and the US have developed a relationship of financial cooperation since China's inclusion into the World Trade Organization. China promotes Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through its sovereign wealth fund; reinvestment of its foreign exchange reserves and investments in bonds and funds into the international market as well as US' domestic financial and entrepreneurial organisations. He suggested that CPEC can serve as an infrastructure model for Pakistan to utilise the Chinese model of generating foreign exchange reserves and reinvesting in the regional and international market. Dr Malik said that the options for negotiation, conflict resolution and regional multilateral trade in South Asia will work if major powers such as the US, China and Russia exercise their influence in initiation of trade-related negotiations between South Asian states as well as global financial and trade regulating institutions.

Dr Najamudin Ayoola, Assistant Professor at the Center for International Peace and Stability, National University of Sciences and Technology, Pakistan, while evaluating Putin's 'Look East Policy', highlighted that Moscow's increasing romance with South Asian countries is not an isolated development, but resonates with its National Security Strategy (NSS); Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (FPCRF); and Maritime Doctrine. However, he cautioned that striking a balance between New Delhi and Islamabad will be problematic for Moscow, just as it has been for Washington. He opined that Russia's policy in South Asia will be selective and country-specific. While discussing Pakistan-Russia relations, Dr Ayoola said that strategic alliance between the US and Pakistan in the 1950s, 1960s and even in the 1970s became an impetus for Indo-Russia relations. It also unfolded realities in Pakistan-Russia relations. He concluded that the success of Russia's 'Look East Policy' would be gauged by its performance in post-Cold War technology and industrial development. It may also depend on energy sharing through energy corridors, strategic alliances and arms agreements with other smaller states.

Moscow will not compromise its relations with one country for another, rather it will be driven by need, necessity and priority

Dr Wang Shida, Deputy Director at the South and Southeast Asia Institute, Chinese Institute of Contemporary International Relations, China, delivered his speech on 'China and South Asia's Economic Outlook.' Talking about energy cooperation between China and Pakistan, he said that for a long time, China-Pakistan cooperation has concentrated on politics, strategy and security, while economic cooperation has not been fully explored. However, this issue has completely changed with the construction of CPEC. He said that CPEC will enhance economic development of Pakistan to a great extent. He

further said that Afghanistan is in a state of turmoil and this has had spillover effect all over the region. He remarked that a peace process is the only way to end the Afghan quagmire and China supports this. Appreciating Pakistan, Dr Shida said that it extended a helping hand to China in difficult times. Therefore, China, a country that values friendship and righteousness, is now willing to return the favour to help accelerate Pakistan's economic and social development.

China can promote the Afghan reconciliation process by ensuring that it is Afghan-led and Afghan-owned, and by promoting comprehensive dialogue among different ethnic groups and seek consensus.

He shared that China is also actively involved in regional hotspot issues, especially in the process of reconciliation in Afghanistan. He further opined that in the future, the Afghan situation will definitely have an important impact on the entire region.

US' South Asia Policy under Trump Administration: Future of Regional Stability

Dr Joshua T. White, Associate Professor at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, USA spoke about Trump's South Asia policy. He said that there are three US assumptions: Pakistan is fundamentally a fragile state; US is highly dependent on Pakistan; Pakistan-US bilateral relations fluctuate between apathy and hostility. While highlighting US President Donald Trump's South Asia policy he discussed how there has been an evolution of views in Washington vis-à-vis Pakistan and its role in Afghanistan. He said that it now appears that the US is no longer dependent on Pakistan because in the post- 9/11 era, Washington's counterterrorism objectives and desire to do something about al-Qaeda have been achieved. However, when it comes to the US objectives in Kabul and Pakistan's role, the results have

been mixed due to great power contestations. Dr White advised that nobody should expect that one can wait-out Trump or that the US-Pak relationship could return to its previous state, but one can hope it stabilises to a lower state because the worst case would be apathy.

The Trump administration is following up on defence and security space with India, but the perceptions this space is creating is polarising the region and could have negative consequences.

The US is directly engaging with the Taliban and looking for a political solution by putting US presence as a bargaining chip on the table since the money spent in the region has been more than what Congress is now willing to bear. He concluded that this is consistent with what Pakistan has been asking of the US from the beginning.

Prof. Dr Ishtiaq Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of the University of Sargodha, Pakistan, delivered his views on 'Reconciliation and Reintegration: Understanding the Complexities of the Afghan Peace Process.' He said that South Asia may now be on a new path since the peace process has taken precedence over the military approach given the flurry of diplomatic efforts. He said that Pakistan, on its part, has made serious efforts towards Afghan peace and reconciliation. It facilitated the Murree talks between the Afghan Government and the Taliban. It also worked with Afghanistan, the US and China in the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), but unfortunately, both times peace was undermined. He made it clear that Pakistan's policy remains to constructively engage in all initiatives and processes for peace.

Peace will remain a distant dream if past history continues to overshadow it, and become a lost opportunity of broken promises, trust deficit and buck passing, if the same old pattern is repeated. The prolonged nature of the conflict itself, economy of conflict and divergent interests are also complicating the peace process.

Dr Ahmad stressed that this paradox needs to be overcome, and players need to engage pragmatically and realistically. He remarked that CPEC has created a geoeconomic framework for conflict resolution in South Asia. It is likely that the framework of conflict in the region is being replaced with a framework of economic integration through connectivity and economic cooperation, he concluded.

Dr M. Sheharyar Khan, Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations, Iqra University, Pakistan spoke on 'Emerging Trends in the Security Architecture of South Asia: Role of Pakistan.' He argued that it is better to analyse South Asia under the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) as the region is distinct from others. In South Asia, the security complex is defined by a group of states, whose primary security concerns are related to the processes of securitisation. Quoting Barry Buzan, the architect of RSCT, Dr Khan said that despite modern advancements in the fields of technology and transportation, the reality remains that security threats have a higher potential to travel over short distances rather than long, and the capacity of most states to extend and assert power beyond their own regional sphere is relatively limited. Consequently, the relationship between geography and anarchy in the existing international system has facilitated the rise of regional security complexes, whereby geographically adjacent states are bound within a distinct regional dynamic, be it conflict or cooperation. While applying the tenets of RSCT in South Asia, Dr Khan said that if one looks at the distribution of power between India and Pakistan, there was imbalance between the two that Pakistan has tried to balance with its nuclear weapons. However, he asserted, balance of power between India and Pakistan has been imbalanced in the recent past.

There is also no change in the enmity between India and Pakistan evident from the former's adventurism in the region, and continuously rejecting Pakistan's efforts for peace talks. There is continuous blame

game between the two nuclear neighbours. Moreover, India is also trying to encircle Pakistan through its involvement in Afghanistan.

He concluded that negative security interdependence is being augmented in the region, especially between India and Pakistan.

South Asian Dynamics: Interests of Major Powers

Mr Harrison Akins, Research Fellow at the University of Tennessee's Howard H Baker Jr., Centre for Public Policy, US read his paper on 'Testing Rationality in Foreign Policy: Donald Trump and the US-Pakistan Relationship.' He began by quoting Pakistan's national poet, Allama Muhammad Iqbal's famous verse 'Nations are born in the hearts of poets; they prosper and die in the hands of politicians.'

Nations and their interests are often conceived in the ideal. Poets and statesmen dream of what is possible and desirable in the virtuous pursuit of governing and improving the lives of their fellow men - this is a vision embraced by many of the great men of history, such as the Quaid-i-Azam, but this dream is dependent upon imperfect men and women with competing ideas about how to achieve those goals and even what those very goals are. As history shows us, they all too often fall short.

Mr Akins was of the view that to understand the current US administration's South Asia policy, it is important to know its foreign policy interests in the region, challenges in achieving them and decision-making process under President Trump. According to him, the US' interests in the region have been security-driven. During the Cold War era, Washington needed allies to halt the expansion of communism in South Asia. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan increased bilateral military and security cooperation between Pakistan and the US. The 9/11 attacks and the 'War on Terror' considerably increased the strategic

significance of Pakistan for the US. He highlighted that the US policy towards this region has been dependent on the shifting saliency of these issues, which, in turn, have determined the increase and decline in strategic necessity of Pakistan. President Trump's August 2017 policy reflected this approach. Mr Akins linked the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan to the ground conditions there.

It is assumed among political analysts and in foreign policy circles that states are rational actors and pursue policies that aim to achieve their national interests. Diplomacy and foreign policy decisions are shielded from the demands and vicissitudes of domestic politics. To extract any rationality from Trump's foreign policy, it is important to take into consideration the great influence domestic politics have on him.

Mr Akins pointed out that this great pivot to domestic political arena and its capacity to influence foreign policy decisions can be explained by some important facts:

1. President Trump's is a minority government - it did not get the majority popular vote.
2. His constituency is predominantly right-wing and to appease them, he wants to look tough on the foreign policy front.

His inexperience on foreign policy issues, his logic of short-term gains and conducting himself as a businessman who makes tough deals, enable one to understand the erratic nature of his decision-making. Despite these things, Mr Akins concluded that the US' long-term policy towards South Asia under the Trump administration has been relatively consistent.

Dr Liu Zongyi, Research Fellow at the Institute for World Economic Studies and Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, Shanghai Institute for International Studies, China, spoke on the 'Geopolitics of South Asia and Interests of China.' Dr Zongyi said that American scholar Robert D. Kaplan argues that the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is the 'Geographical Pivot of 21st Century'. And in recent years, some Western scholars and officials believe that the geographical pivot of history has shifted to the Asia-Pacific region. He outlined that these arguments provide a theoretical basis for the US' 'Pivot to Asia' or 'Rebalance to Asia-Pacific' and 'Indo-Pacific' strategy. In US' geostrategic design, South Asia and IOR are very important components. Dr Zongyi highlighted that the geopolitical situation of South Asia is very complicated, which is a result of three levels of geopolitical competition and cooperation. First, with the shift of global geopolitical structure, the US is trying its best to defend its hegemonic status and contain competitors, which has caused conflicts and contradictions with Russia, China and other emerging powers, including India. The second level is the regional structure problem led by the simultaneous rise of China and India. The third level is India and Pakistan's geopolitical conflict in South Asia. This competition is reflected not only in the bilateral boundary issue, but in the Afghanistan issue as well.

SAARC can no longer survive because of the conflict between India and Pakistan.

These three levels of geopolitical conflicts are entangled with each other. He warned that if such geopolitical competitions increase further, it is possible that a serious geopolitical confrontation, or another Great Game, would take place in this region with the US, India and Japan on one side; and Russia, China, and Pakistan on the other. However, there is not only geopolitical competition, but also geoeconomic cooperation

in South Asia which mainly includes the BRI by China, New Silk Road Project raised by the US in 2011, International North-South Transport Corridor between India, Iran and Afghanistan, BBIN, BIMSTEC, and Sagar Mala, etc.

Dr Zongyi highlighted that the BRI is a top-level design of China's opening-up and economic diplomacy in the new era.

China's interests in this region are relatively simple, which involve anti-secessionism, boundary peace and stability, antiterrorism, regional peace, and security of sea lines for trade and energy. With advancement of the BRI and continuous challenges, China is paying more attention to the peace and security of South Asia and IOR to eliminate the negative effects caused by this cooperation.

Mr Leonid Savin, Chief Editor of *Geopolitica.ru* and founder and Chief Editor *Journal of Eurasian Affairs*, discussed Moscow's interests in South Asia. According to him, there are three important countries in terms of geopolitical characteristics and significance that are located in the heartland of South Asia - Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The rest of the countries serve as a kind of buffer and for objective reasons cannot have a fundamental impact on the geopolitical processes in the region. The role and status of the other five countries are limited; they fall into the sphere of influence of other actors, although they can act as significant subjects. Mr Savin was of the view that the Russian Federation, together with Afghanistan as well as other interested states who rely on the possibilities offered by the UN, CIS, Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), SCO and other international organisations, will be consistent in its efforts to resolve as soon as possible the problems the country is facing, while respecting the rights and legitimate interests of all ethnic groups living in its territory so that Afghanistan can enter post-conflict recovery as a sovereign, peaceful, neutral state with a sustainable

economy and political system. He outlined that implementing comprehensive measures to mitigate the terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan against other states, including neighbouring countries, as well as eliminate or substantially reduce the illicit production and trafficking of narcotic drugs is an integral part of these efforts. Russia is committed to further intensifying UN-led international efforts aimed at helping Afghanistan and its neighbouring states counter these challenges.

One of Russia's main security concerns is the persisting instability in Afghanistan. After the withdrawal of foreign forces, Afghanistan poses a major security threat to Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

He warned that the global terrorist threat has reached a new high with the emergence of the Islamic State as well as other international terror networks which aspire to create their own state and seek to consolidate their influence on a territory stretching from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to Pakistan.

The main effort in combatting terrorism should be aimed at creating a broad international counterterrorism coalition with a solid legal foundation, one that is based on effective and consistent inter-state cooperation without any political considerations or double standards, above all to prevent terrorism and extremism and counter the spread of radical ideas.

Dr Maria Sultan, Director General of the South Asia Strategic Stability Institute, presented her views on 'China-India-Pakistan Nuclear Triangle: Paradigm of Nuclear Power and Regional Equilibrium.' She said that the Indian Ocean rimland technically hosts 28 nations, which are now emerging as the hub of international economic trade. These states

will likely influence and shape the potential rivalry between major powers of the world. She opined that the 'Pivot to Asia' is moving towards the IOR, particularly to South Asia, because of the following important factors:

1. It would be a major trading route.
2. It would perhaps be the most securitised region of the world.
3. It would record the largest population growth.
4. It has the most industrialisation and port development potential.
5. It has Eurasian connectivity, and has access to the Pacific; and
6. Future consumption patterns will be concentrated in this region.

Energy connectivity will play a significant role in shaping future rivalry among major powers. The Indian Ocean carries half of the world's seaborne oil. It houses 23 of the world's top 100 ports, and Gwadar Port will emerge as a significant port. At this point, there are 12 mega ports in the world and Gwadar will be the 13th largest port in the world. This indicates that this region will not only become a hub of international trade, but will also be the centre of rivalry among major powers to control maritime routes. Dr Sultan stressed that economic interests will reflect security projections of great powers, in the process making the Indian Ocean the most securitised region of the world. She highlighted that in the 1970s, the maritime trade or container traffic was concentrated mostly in Europe, followed by parts of China and America. A significant difference was witnessed in 1980s with the developments of mega ports in China and the US. The 1990s witnessed the rise of Singapore and Asian Tigers in the Pacific region dominating global trade. However, she pointed out that something significant changed in 2006 and in 2017. Now, global trade is connected through five important inter-connecting

points. It is now not just about Trans-Pacific anymore, it is also about Eurasia, where most of the global trade will be centred. The BRI by China will increase the significance of this region substantially. It will facilitate North-South connectivity, connecting China not only to Pakistan and the Middle East but also to Africa. Pakistan will play a pivotal role in this regard. Dr Sultan warned that this region faces many threats, like cyber security, piracy, terrorism, ISIS, great power rivalry, nuclearisation, increased militarisation of major choke-points, development of naval bases and presence of extra-regional powers and their security interests.

There are two dominant global trade routes: Trans-Pacific and Eurasia. The former includes the US and China, but the latter does not include the US; it is only between Europe and Asia. Hence, future rivalry will be determined in terms of who controls the North-South route. This explains the growing number of military bases in the region and in future this region will be dealing with new military patterns.

She said that it is important to take stock of India's military build-up in the Indian Ocean, which has been encouraged by the US in three significant ways:

1. The US has been pushing to give India access to the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
2. Strategic Trade Authorisation-1 status to India will facilitate high-tech industrial cooperation between the two countries.
3. DTTI allows for defence cooperation between India and US. There are other agreements as well that allow the US to use Indian bases for logistics purposes.

Dr Sultan opined that it is ironic that Pakistan has fought the War on Terror with the US to eradicate the threat of terrorism, but defence and strategic cooperation between India and the US has risen more

substantially than with the former. This has put Pakistan under great strain, she concluded.

From Geopolitics to Geoeconomic Trajectories

Dr Huma Baqai, Associate Dean at the Institute of Business Administration, Pakistan presented her paper on 'Investing in Peace: Economic Interdependence in South Asia.' Dr Baqai said that South Asia is one of the most disintegrated regions in the world. Security and strategic issues have always remained dominant, though there are geoeconomic trends that are steadily emerging, but the geopolitical realities will continue to govern and shape this region. She shared that China could potentially be a precursor to regional integration of this region, but it happens to be an extra-regional player. The major and important question is: can China do to South Asia what the US did to Western Europe after World War II.

One of the impediments to regional integration in the past was the Cold War and one of the impediments that is preventing regional integration now is the new Cold War between China and the US which is unfolding. This rivalry has pushed the US into the Thucydides Trap.

She was of the view that SAARC, which was supposed to promote regional integration, has come under an existential threat. There are many impediments that undermine the potential of regional integration. The most important is the rivalry between the two main protagonists: India and Pakistan. Trade is minuscule and whatever little trade takes place is normally through a third party. The 'Look East Policy' of both the countries is also divergent. India looks up to the US, Australia, Russia, Japan and Myanmar, whereas Pakistan looks up to China as a strategic and an economic partner. It is also important to factor in Afghanistan, where rivalry between the two regional protagonists can be seen. Regional integration remains hostage to the Afghan situation, and even

Pakistan's relations with the US remain hostage to the situation there, she remarked. There are other complications for middle powers like India. It has to adjust its economic and military ties with big powers. For example, it has great trade and economic ties with China, but its strategic outlook is West-oriented. It is the only country in the region that is not part of CPEC. Dr Baqai pointed out that geopolitical and geoeconomic trends will continue to run in parallel, and hoped that states learn to overcome the impediments, and geoeconomics prevails over geopolitical trends.

Dr Naeem Ahmed, Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, Pakistan, presented his paper on 'Moving from Conflict Management to Conflict Resolution: Way Out for India and Pakistan.' Dr Ahmed highlighted that Pakistan-India relations have been characterised by mutual distrust, conflicts and hostilities. Peace talks and negotiations have always proved to be short-lived and unsuccessful. He was of the view that Pakistan-India relations are extremely complex and should not be seen through a single prism. The first perspective is the religious perspective. Both states have different religio-politico ideologies that also shape their relations with each other. The second perspective is the territorial disputes that remain unresolved. Then, there is the weak-strong dynamics and the issue of imbalance of power between the two neighbours. This power disequilibrium makes India behave like a hegemon and pushes Pakistan to seek alliances with extra-regional powers to secure its security interests. Dr Ahmed recommended that since Pakistan and India have had antagonistic relations with each other, it is important that both states move beyond conflict management that only establishes a precarious peace, to conflict resolution that requires prevention of conflicts.

Dr Sarwat Rauf, Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations, National University of Modern Languages, Pakistan, presented her paper on 'Sino-US Geopolitical Competition: Implications for Pakistan.' She said that the geopolitical competition between the US and China will have an impact on Pakistan's internal and external policies. According to her, revisionist powers (such as China and Russia) have become a challenge for a traditional power like the US. Indeed, global geopolitical competition is having a profound impact on world politics, changing the nature of US-China engagement with South Asian states. She opined that the peaceful rise of China is contrary to other emerging powers who grabbed resources by attacking other states, made colonies and expanded their area of influence by using coercive means. Dr Rauf highlighted that China's rise is exorable and the US cannot stop it. She was of the view that social stability and economic prosperity will be the leading drivers of China's domestic and foreign policy behaviour for the next few decades.

In order to deal with global powers, Pakistan should adopt a balanced approach. Internally, it should focus on its economic development, elimination of fundamentalist mindset and industrial development must be its priority. Externally, Pakistan should continue to strengthen its relations with China. It should find a solution to the existing irritants in relations with Iran and Afghanistan. Resolution of the Kashmir issue and other disputes with India must also remain centrestage.

PART ONE

- **Welcome Address**
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Welcome Address

Brig. (R) Mehboob Qadir

Former Director Research
Islamabad Policy Research Institute, Pakistan

On behalf of the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI), I warmly welcome the Chief Guest, General Ehsan-ul-Haq and our distinguished Keynote Speaker H.E. Ambassador Yao Jing of the People's Republic of China. I extend warm greetings to the learned scholars from the United States, China, Russia and Pakistan, who are participating in this conference. The Islamabad Policy Research Institute is holding this international conference to discuss the various conflicts in nuclear South Asia and the role major powers can play to facilitate cooperative solutions for their amicable resolution.

As you all know, we are living in an era of great flux. The world order that was created in the aftermath of the Second World War has nearly disappeared. The foundations and architecture of global multilateral institutions underpinning the existing world order are gradually witnessing an erosion of legitimacy. Confidence in these institutions is depleting due to their inability to arrest the rise of inter-state conflicts, fix dysfunctional or fractured states and minimise the ensuing humanitarian costs. A slumping world economy, trade wars, return of protectionism, re-emergence of narrow nationalist and ultra-right forces in the West, climate change, food insecurity and so on, are other significant challenges that need to be grappled with successfully. The rise of China and

resurgence of Russia as new power centres, as well as emphasis on regionalism is also fast eroding confidence in global multilateral institutions.

Asia remains the most threatened in terms of violent conflicts. Protracted conflicts like Kashmir and Palestine and inter-state conflicts ranging from Burma to Syria continue to rage unabated. According to the Global Peace Index (GPI), around 60 million people became refugees from 2007 to 2016, out of which three million were from Syria alone.

The fate of roughly three million Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan remains undecided. Ethnic, religious and cultural strife has shattered the social fabric of societies in West Asia. The unresolved disputes of Palestine and Kashmir continue to fester unabatedly and repressive occupation remains unchallenged and unaccountable despite unprecedented human rights violations and wide media publicity.

The US' hazy role in Afghanistan, rising China with a slogan of 'Shared Destiny' and the future of re-emerging Russia are inextricably intertwined with the political, economic and security trajectories of the South Asian region. Relations between the US and Pakistan have undergone a serious transformation from strategic alliance to strategic dissonance.

A new dawn of bilateral cooperation between Russia and Pakistan has arrived, where both countries share reasonable convergence of interests in the region.

At the beginning of this decade, China, through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) offered an opportunity for regional

connectivity and inter-regional cooperation. Pakistan believes that regional connectivity will qualitatively change the lives of 1.9 billion people of the South Asian region. Opening Kartarpur Corridor is also a small step in this direction. Similarly, Pakistan's Gwadar deep seaport will serve as an economic gateway for the entire region. We have invited a number of regional and extra-regional states to invest in CPEC and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) of Pakistan.

Pakistan has suffered terribly due to the incessant conflict in Afghanistan and incessant hostility from its eastern neighbour, India. The absence of a regional political forum in South Asia to debate political issues and the inability of SAARC to achieve economic integration is a collective failure of the South Asian countries. Resultantly, these countries have more trade with others rather than among themselves.

India being a larger South Asian country and a stronger economy, has more tell about this sorry state of affairs. Needless to say, that blowback effect of the Afghan crisis has induced violence in Pakistan, massive destruction of former FATA region and displacement of its population.

Powerful regional countries and global powers must shoulder their responsibilities by using their influence to bring the South Asian countries to the table, shun violence, coercion and destabilising proxies.

I hope that this two-day conference will help us in debating pressing issues facing the region in an objective manner and explore how to its huge potential through a spectrum of voluntary, peaceful and cooperative linkages creating lasting bonds between countries and their people.■

Keynote Address

Ambassador Yao Jing

Ambassador to Pakistan
People's Republic of China

First of all, I would like to thank the Islamabad Policy Research Institute for organising a very meaningful conference on South Asia along with its relations with major countries of the world. I am also extremely honoured to talk about China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and China's relations with South Asia. First of all, let me present a brief introduction of so-called BRI. In fact, this is the 5th anniversary for the Chinese government, particularly Chinese President Mr Xi Jinping when he launched BRI in 2013. BRI is basically an economic cooperation initiative and an effort by the Chinese government and business community for a more economically connected region. Right now, China has, under the BRI, concluded more than 100 agreements of cooperation under the supervision of major international institutions like the United Nations (UN), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and G20. All these major institutions/organisations have recognised the potential and principles of BRI.

Basically, BRI is functioning under the principle of mutual consultation and mutual sharing through which China will contribute to the development of the neighbourhood as a kind of collaboration in the development sector. There is also a conception

that China can contribute by providing its cooperation for the greater public good of the region and the world at large.

There are several figures available for the past five years that second the above mentioned claim. For example, since China initiated BRI, China's trade volume with the partners of this initiative has exceeded USD 5 trillion. China's investment towards this framework is more than USD 60 billion. Moreover, more than quarter of a million jobs have been created with the collaboration under the BRI. China's FDI towards this initiative is almost USD 7.5 billion. Right now, China and BRI partners have established more than 80 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and have created 40,000 jobs over the past six months.

Today, since the topic is about South Asia and China, let me elaborate a little bit about China's relations with South Asian countries. China and South Asia have a common history. The so-called Silk Road has ancient links between the two. Based on a shared historical relationship, including trade links, people-to-people contact over the past 2000 years, China is a natural partner for the development and future of South Asia. BRI was launched five years ago and most South Asian countries have been very active partners with China under this initiative, mainly because of historical links. In the past five years, trade and investment between China and South Asia has been increasing. Moreover, in 2017, China's trade volume with South Asian countries increased up to USD 130 billion. Right now, China is the biggest partner of the region.

CPEC is the leading project because it demonstrates basic principles and conceptions of BRI. For example, all the projects under CPEC are decided purely in consultation between Chinese and Pakistani

governments. So far, there are 22 projects under CPEC, of which several Early Harvest projects are already functioning and contributing to the welfare and development of Pakistan and China. China, of course, is also the biggest trade partner of Pakistan. It is a major source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Over the past five years, Pakistan's average GDP growth has reached 4.8 per cent, wherein China has contributed about USD 2 billion FDI. Under the leadership of Pakistan's government, especially after the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to China, both the Chinese and Pakistani government have agreed to further expand and broaden CPEC. This means that both countries have to develop their social sector, investment and trade cooperation under this initiative. Therefore, on 20 December 2019, the 8th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) will meet in China for further planning and implementation of the Corridor.

CPEC is enough for successful operationalisation of BRI. It could also be an example for future improvement of BRI cooperation as the region needs more resources for inclusive development and private sector cooperation. Moreover, South Asia is still facing security challenges, such as conflicting situation in Afghanistan and non-traditional challenges. China is also faced with some challenges. Both regions have a lot of common ground to collaborate and cooperate in dealing with traditional and non-traditional threats. In this regard, China's policy or advocacy impinges on the belief that development is the key in dealing with these challenges, which is also one of the fundamental conceptions for China to initiate the BRI. Economic cooperation, under BRI, can only be possible with improvement in peace and stability, economic development, and social progress. Therefore, the region is witnessing a new trend right now - dialogue, communication and political negotiation for improving state-to-state relations. The Pakistani government has

offered dialogue to its neighbours, including India and Afghanistan for the settlement of issues and promotion of regional peace and stability, which is very welcomed by China. China supports such gestures for a better relationship between South Asian nations. China also believes that this dialogue and communication will help in finding proper solutions for existing challenges.

From China's perspective, for a successful BRI and CPEC, security is the basic consideration. In this regard, the Chinese government and people appreciate Pakistan's efforts for proper and prompt security measures for all the economic projects in the country. A lot of positive work has been done by the government in dealing with these challenges, and China has confidence that Pakistan will provide pro-business and pro-investment environment, not only for Chinese businesses, but also for the whole international community. Under the BRI, China is working on a common community to share the future in South Asia. People-to-people contact also matter a great deal in this regard.

China also has historical disputes or differences with South Asia on a few issues, but we believe that with the encouragement of more dialogue and communication, wisdom will prevail in dealing with these challenges. Furthermore, South Asia is composed of a lot of emerging economies and trends, China and South Asian states can learn from each other in dealing with existing and emerging challenges. Given our common history and for regional future, China is very willing to cooperate with all the governments and people of the region. In this context, China is willing and in a position to be a reliable partner for development as well as a promoter of peace and stability of the region.

2018 is China's 40th anniversary of reform and opening up. For the past 40 years, China has accumulated vast experience about how to deal with poverty, underdevelopment, and development imbalance. And we are ready to share our experience with all the South Asian nations.

China believes that South Asia is the most dynamic region with the greatest potential for internal development as well as for the whole world. This entire region has a very promising future through shared cooperation in all developmental and security sectors. BRI will provide a new platform to China and South Asian countries to conduct more effective cooperation. In this regard, China is ready and believes that Pakistan is also ready to disseminate the benefits of development to the whole region.■

Inaugural Address

Tehmina Janjua

29th Foreign Secretary of Pakistan

It is indeed a pleasure and a privilege to address this august gathering of very learned people. At the outset, I would like to congratulate IPRI for organising this conference on a topic of immense importance and relevance not only to us but the South Asian region as a whole. The concept paper, along with the speakers' list, amply demonstrates that a lot of hard work has gone into it. My heartiest felicitations! There is a need to have more such initiatives not only by IPRI but other such institutes as well.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs believes in closer interaction with think tanks and institutions engaged in academic research owing to the complex nature of policy formulation in the contemporary era. We are, therefore, happy to continue this collaboration in a sustained manner as we share the same objectives. The learned speakers would be deliberating on various aspects of the topic. My endeavor would be to share Pakistan's perspective.

Our region, i.e. South Asia is the most happening region in the global political landscape being at the centre of the Eurasian heartland. Its geostrategic significance is an acknowledged fact which is why we observe consistent engagement of major powers with the region. Currently, we observe realignments taking place due to the evolving nature of geostrategic and geoeconomic realities.

Lying astride the confluence of geography, history and trade routes and corridors, the region has witnessed considerable economic growth during the last few decades and has the potential to become the next economic powerhouse. But sadly, poverty, deprivation, disease and hunger still pervade the landscape. Unresolved political disputes have fed into other comparatively minor issues and perpetuated an atmosphere of distrust and mistrust.

The approach by its largest actor to dominate without caring to address the core issues, is at the heart of this 'conflict' in the region. The behaviour of flatly refusing to engage, despite sincere peace overtures; anti-Pakistan frenzy for domestic politicking; meddling in Balochistan and FATA, as well as Afghanistan; suppressing the legitimate freedom movement in Indian Occupied Kashmir; heating up the Line of Control (LoC) and Working Boundary; massively building up conventional and strategic capabilities; engaging in denigrating propaganda against initiatives of economic and trade connectivity; and scuttling vehicles of regional cooperation are some of the manifestations of this approach.

To our west, the decades-old conflict in Afghanistan has adversely affected the country itself, its neighbours and regional countries, with Pakistan suffering the most from the continual turmoil. The conflict in Afghanistan is a complex scenario having domestic, regional and international dynamics. Internally, multiple power centres, war-fatigued and overstretched security forces etc. are some of the challenges that need urgent attention. The nexus between narco-trade and terror financing pose another serious threat to peace in Afghanistan and the regional countries. The growing presence of transnational terrorist groups, including Daesh, in Afghanistan and their concentration closer to the borders of

Pakistan has further added to complexity of the challenge. The competing interest of regional and international actors has been an impediment to any peace initiative. Over-reliance on the kinetic approach, as opposed to a political course, has exacerbated sufferings of the common Afghans and reduced chances of settling the conflict. It is, however, a positive sign that finally there seems to be consensus among the regional and international players that the most viable solution to the conflict lies in a politically negotiated settlement.

It is vindication of Pakistan's long-held view that kinetic approach has failed to deliver results and the solution lies in a political settlement. In this regard, direct contacts between the US and the Taliban's Qatar office are a welcome development. We expect that these talks will result in initiation of a formal peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan.

As a shared responsibility, Pakistan remains ready, along with all stakeholders, to work together for creating favourable conditions for talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

While regional peace and stability is a common and permanent denominator for economic development, the situation to our east has, unfortunately, remained far from desirable. The long-standing issues between India and Pakistan have kept the region from realising its true economic potential and prosperity. In his quest for cooperation in the region, Prime Minister Imran Khan in his inaugural address to the nation offered two steps forward if India would take one, to improve bilateral relations. Regrettably, India has failed to reciprocate in the same spirit. Despite this, Pakistan took a landmark decision to open the Kartarpur Corridor which was a

longstanding desire of the Sikh community, especially from India. However, this goodwill gesture was also subjected to controversy due to Indian domestic politics. India regrettably continues with its belligerent attitude threatening Pakistan with 'limited war' and so-called 'surgical strikes'.

Meanwhile, India has continued its reign of terror in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir including the use of pellet guns to maim and kill innocent civilians. The recent report of Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) validates Pakistan's concerns about Indian atrocities in IoJ&K. The report of All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) of the UK Parliament on Kashmir released on 30 October 2018 condemns the Indian atrocities in IoJ&K and recommends urgent repeal of draconian laws which provide legal immunity to Indian occupation forces in their atrocities against innocent Kashmiris.

On its part, India has deliberately escalated tensions at the LoC and the Working Boundary to divert attention of the international community from the grave situation in IoJ&K. India is also spending massively on its conventional force modernisation. Pakistan is concerned that such an arms race would be detrimental to peace and stability of the region. The recently held India-US 2+2 Dialogue provides India access to advanced and sensitive US military hardware, technology and weaponry. India has also signed a deal with Russia to acquire the advanced S-400 air defence missile system, which could undermine the delicate strategic balance in the region. Such military cooperation by major powers emboldens India to pursue its hegemonic designs in South Asia.

Pakistan does not subscribe to any nuclear or conventional arms race in the region. However, it would continue to pursue the concept of Credible Minimum Deterrence to maintain strategic stability in the region. The major powers should keep in view the sensitivities of this region while extending military cooperation to India, which is increasingly using such cooperation to pursue its hegemonic designs.

A confrontational atmosphere in the region is not conducive to regional peace, cooperation and integration. Pakistan, on its part, is making efforts to remain active in promoting peace and cooperation in the region by remaining engaged in various regional forums such as SAARC and SCO. Pakistan attaches great importance to SAARC and remains committed to the principles and objectives of the SAARC Charter. Pakistan has played an active role to make SAARC a useful vehicle for regional cooperation based on the principle of sovereign equality.

China is integrating different regions through the massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Its flagship project CPEC could contribute to the integration of South Asia and beyond. The core vision of CPEC is to improve infrastructure to facilitate interconnectivity. It can empower South Asia to enjoy the full benefits of region-wide trade.

Our region needs peace, stability and investment for the collective uplift of its people. It is time to overcome the demons of the past and look forward to the prospects of the future so that the large issues of poverty, deprivation and disease can be addressed.

We look forward to benefitting from the informed discourse of this conference and hope that it will contribute towards developing an

understanding of some of the important policy options. It has been a privilege to share some of my thoughts with you this morning. I look forward to more such engagements in the future.

I thank you all.■

Concluding Address

Sardar Masood Khan

President
Azad Jammu and Kashmir

I want to congratulate IPRI for organising such a successful two-day international conference.

The international order, as we knew it for decades, is in flux as multilateralism has been pushed to the margins of international decision-making. United Nations itself, which symbolises the multilateral order in the world, has been marginalised when it comes to decisions about peace and security.

Let me also add that despite this temporary transient instability of the UN, the world is moving towards multipolarity. One major factor in this regard is that no-one can guarantee or ensure United States (US) exceptionalism or exceptionalism up to this point does not apply to the US which is referred to as the 'indispensable nation'. The US continues to be an 'indispensable nation' in many ways in the world today and it would continue to remain so in the decades to come. Let nobody make a mistake about that. But, would the US be accepted as a world leader or leader of the World Order without any qualification is not certain because there are other emerging nations now. There are strategic competitors, economic competitors and there are new groups of states that are also emerging, which are redefining the

power structure of the world either economically or militarily or strategically. So, one has to take that into consideration.

Somebody also referred to the Thucydides Trap.

The Chinese government has posited the proposition that the US and China do not have to confront each other, that they can co-exist, co-share, and they can cooperate instead of confronting each other. They can collaborate. But this thesis is not being accepted universally because the existing power thinks that behind the Belt and Road Initiative, there are strategic designs. Therefore, while in the near future, the main threat or challenge is in the geoeconomic realm, in the long run, it is geopolitical and geoeconomic competition.

If one looks at the performance of the UN over the past decade or so, it has been very active and energetic on the 2030 Sustainable Agenda, but, as far as peace and security is concerned, whether they are peace and security issues in Africa, Balkans, or anywhere in the world, the UN is not the central player.

Competition between China and the US is a fact, it is a reality and it is going to stay there for some time to come. It is our responsibility to devise ways to contain the fallout as far as Pakistan is concerned. It is a very difficult proposition since ensuring that the country's pristine relationship with China remains pristine, while at the same time remaining on the right side of the US - the world leader. The latter is becoming harder. It is a challenge for Pakistan's current and future leadership.

The US has once again reached the conclusion that it cannot resolve issues related to Afghanistan without Pakistan's involvement. Therefore, there is engagement which can have impact on other dimensions of the Pak-US relationship as well.

Because of the developments that have taken place in the recent past, prospects for improvement in the relationship between Pakistan and the US have brightened because of Afghanistan. There is engagement between the two sides.

With regard to India and Pakistan relations, Pakistan is welcome to continue to make unilateral overtures to India. But from the Indian side, there would be scant, minimal, or grudging reciprocity as seen in case of the Kartarpur Corridor. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Islamabad should stop making overtures, even if they are unilateral, because the strategic community in the country understands that peace is in Pakistan's interest. Pakistan needs peace, security and stability in the region to progress economically and progress rapidly in the economic field.

Another factor is that India is moving towards elections in 2019 which are going to be very messy. Until then, Pakistan should not expect any reciprocity to its overtures. Beyond that, nobody knows because after the elections, one will have to see what political configuration emerges in India.

Shut all the doors of communication and dialogue with Pakistan and be hostile because that is the narrative that sells in India. Indian leadership is selling it to the majority of its population because 80 per cent of them are Hindus.

Let me also briefly talk about changing dynamics in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). India is trying to change the demography of the region by a series of measures. One measure that they are taking is to settle West Pakistani refugees and giving them permanent resident status. They are also working on a formula called 'Forty-four Plus', which means that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that has been successful in the last elections in Jammu wants to dominate or get overwhelming majority in the J&K Assembly in the next elections. If the BJP gets forty four plus votes, it can then implement its agenda and the agenda would include: 1) repeal or revision of Article 370; 2) repeal or revision of Article 35 (A).

Other things they have started doing in Indian Occupied Kashmir is to poach political members or political elite of the People's Democratic Party and divert their loyalties towards the BJP.

Otherwise, their strategy is hurt Kashmiris beyond their capacity to bear this punishment and make them part of the Indian dictate. They want to terrorise Kashmiris thinking this would force them to surrender. Everyone is familiar with the massive human rights violations that are taking place in the IOK - killings, blinding, torture, rape are being used as weapons of war, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, and application of draconian laws. In simple words, there is a reign of terror in the IOK. Other facets of Indian strategy include not talking to the political leadership of the IOK - the joint resistance leadership.

In Afghanistan, prospects of engagement are there but what should Pakistan do?

While CPEC is valuable for Pakistan, it should be treated as a catalyst for the country's economy not a substitute for its own economic development planning. This point must be understood because CPEC, no doubt, is very important and it will influence Pakistan's economy but it is not a panacea. Pakistan has to take national responsibility with regard to a broad range of issues. Therefore, instead of CPEC as a pivot, Pakistan should start thinking of CPEC-Plus.

I would say that Pakistan should continue to invest in the peace process. Pak-China relations and the launch of CPEC has helped the Kashmir dispute internationally because India objected instantly to CPEC and the world started paying attention to the Kashmir dispute as well. This is the second time that the Kashmir dispute is getting attention at the international level - the first was the after the nuclear test in 1998.

Pakistan's relations with the Russian Federation or rapprochement with that great nation is unfolding very slowly. Pakistan must continue to invest in the defence sector and other areas. In Europe, it is a pity that on some of the issues that impinge on Pakistan's security, it is forced to bear India's influence because of the economic partnerships which the latter has struck with European countries individually, and with the European Union collectively.

As a nation Pakistan must have a national compass, a national security paradigm and within that framework it should be making efforts for defining its national security policy. It should not be in bits and pieces and it should not be implemented in silos. It should be a holistic paradigm.

The other factor is the broader alliance between the US and Europe and that alliance believes in the centrality of India in the overall global equation.

India has made them believe that it would be able to decelerate the progress of China which is in the strategic interest of Western countries. The contradiction here is that while the Western countries push India to play this role, European countries and the US are keen to develop mutual dependencies with China.

Nevertheless, Pakistan should continue trying to manage its relations with India, without expecting any rapprochement. Second, Pakistan should invest in the Afghan peace process without expecting quick dividends. And third, Pakistan should never change, abandon, and alter its stance on Kashmir.

Pakistan must be absolutely clear where it wants to be in 2030 or 2050. The country's economy must take absolute priority, but economic growth or development without socioeconomic achievements would be empty progress. Therefore, Pakistan has to ensure that it focuses, with equal emphasis, on the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda, particularly Goal 4, which relates to quality education.

Moreover, Pakistan must not, in any circumstances, abandon the international dimension of the Kashmir dispute. There are Resolutions which were passed by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) back in the late 1940s and 1950s, and those Resolutions are operative, valid and still on the active agenda of the UNSC. In this regard, Pakistan should go to influential parliaments of the world to make Kashmir's case more powerful. From the 1940s and

1950s, India has been plotting to occupy the territory permanently, Pakistan has to engage the international community with its eyes open because there will be no dramatic solutions. Pakistan needs to continue to invest in peaceful and diplomatic means to resolve the Kashmir dispute. Last but not the least, the people of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir have to leverage the strength of the Diaspora community in Europe, North America, the Gulf region and the Asia-Pacific. Their numbers have gone up and their engagement and interface with Pakistan's decision-makers could result in huge dividends for the country.

I thank you all for your patient listening.■

Recommendations

The contributors to this anthology put forward the following recommendations:

South Asia

- Apart from traditional security threats, South Asian countries face multiple common challenges in the realm of non-traditional security. It is imperative that regional cooperation be sought to address such collective concerns like rising poverty, food insecurity, water shortage, illicit trafficking, poor human development indices etc., in the social sector and human resource development.
- Being a less integrated region, South Asia should emulate conflict management techniques as exhibited by China and India; France and Germany, whereby deeper economic engagement have created joint stakes in resolving bilateral conflicts through mutual trust and cooperation. This will also help in diminishing prospects of any future wars, especially given the nuclear dimension of the region.
- Regarding the on-going peace efforts in Afghanistan, there should also be an emphasis on reinforcing the legitimacy of the government in Kabul and facilitating an internal consensus, apart from making efforts to bring the warring sides to the negotiating table. Similarly, apart from developing a consensus on eliminating the sanctuaries of replanted Islamic State-Khorasan (IS-K) aka Daesh in Afghanistan,

South Asian countries should focus on the long-term agenda of ensuring sustainable peace in the devastated country.

- China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) offers a vision of common economic development for South Asia, which may eventually lead to a common security architecture. China is the biggest trade partner of the South Asian countries. Rather than attempting to sink such economic initiatives into controversy, they should be seen for what they truly are - means for mutual economic prosperity and development.
- The South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) should not be held hostage to Pakistan-India hostility. Since India is attempting to isolate Pakistan at the international and regional level, other SAARC member countries must prioritise the greater interest of the region, and should not align themselves with mutually exclusive policies towards each other.

Major Powers

- Overemphasis on the kinetic approach in political conflicts has failed to deliver the desired results in the realm of conflict resolution. In fact, such actions have led to more instability and turmoil. Hence, emphasis should be placed on diplomatic means, political dialogue and negotiations at both bilateral and multilateral levels to amicably settle inter-state disputes. Pakistan's recent peace overtures towards both Afghanistan and India are, unfortunately, not being reciprocated. The existing political and security paradigm demands that countries resume dialogue and open communication channels at the minimum to exchange views and opinions regarding issues of critical nature. Global powers should play a proactive role in bridging the divide between the disputants by

facilitating political engagement between South Asian countries.

- The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the South Asian flagship of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), whose full potential could be realised with the success of the former.
- With the rising silhouette of multipolarity, the United States (US) should reassess its interests and engage with other emerging powers such as China and Russia to help the South Asian countries in the area of conflict resolution. Afghanistan is one such ravaged country that needs regional and extra-regional cooperation to stabilise itself.
- The emerging regional alignments in South Asia, such as the Indo-US and Pakistan-China strategic partnerships are meant to ensure each other's security and economic interests in the region. The major powers should also help resolve issues of critical concern. Political polarisation in South Asia should not impact conflict resolution in the region.

Pakistan

- Financially stable countries are more likely to draw the positive attention of global powers than weak or fragile states. Pakistan should, therefore, focus on strengthening its economy through structural reforms and robust trade strategies. Bilateral transit trade agreements and SAARC's agenda should be promoted so that regional trade volume can be enhanced.■

PART TWO

Role of Major Powers in South Asia

- **The US and South Asia: From Unipolarity to Multipolarity**
  Dr Ahmed Ijaz Malik

- **Russia and South Asia: Putin's Look East Policy**
  Dr Najamudin Ayoola

- **Current Situation and Future of Economic Cooperation between China and South Asia**
  Dr Wang Shida

The US and South Asia: From Unipolarity to Multipolarity

1

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Introduction

The patterns of global polarity have remained significant for political analysts to understand and explain emerging trends in International Relations. Since the end of World War II up to the disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), bipolarity had been theoretically developed as a concept to explain the nature of the international order and the dynamics of the Cold War. The discipline of IR developed significantly during these years. However, there remained a dearth of theorisation regarding the end of the Cold War, future of bipolarity, and the nature of polarity in the post-Cold War order. The theorisations remained significantly influenced by conceptualisations of bipolarity during the Cold War and appeared to argue in favour of the evolution of a unipolar order; and a scepticism towards multipolar order since multipolarity was one of the factors that contributed to World Wars I and II. However, broadly, analysis of these particular global transformations necessitates research and enquiry primarily into the idea of 'polarity'. While there are influential arguments claiming that post-Cold War order appears to have emerged as unipolar and is likely to transform into a multipolar order; post-Cold War multipolarity appears different in comparison to the multipolarity of the pre-Cold War years.

Therefore, the modern pattern of multipolarity needs explanation and may also be usefully employed in order to explain the current strategic as well as geoeconomic compulsions and options, especially for the major global powers as well as the South Asian states. The categorisation of Russia and China as poles in the current international order has had significant implication for South Asia.

The chronological parameters of analyses as defined in this study are Cold War, post-Cold War and post-9/11 eras, beginning with brief explanations of bipolarity, unipolarity and multipolarity, since they evolved in this order in the post-World War II era. In order to focus on South Asia, these notions shall be employed to elaborate regional dynamics peculiar to the region. The purpose is to identify significant areas of theoretical convergence. The identification of these points of convergence shall serve the purpose of highlighting the transformed nature of alliances, regional economic structures and strategic dynamics in South Asia in a multipolar world. The post-Cold War Realist discourses on multipolarity focussed on Offense-Defence balance, including military balance, cumulativity of power resources and strategic beliefs. It had been argued that bipolar systems are marginally less warlike, but frequency, magnitude, and severity of war in multipolar and bipolar systems can be better explained by the stable balance between offensive and defensive forces.[1] There is a need to understand the dynamics of post-Cold War multipolarity and analyse the degree of vulnerability and stability.

In order to elaborate the nature of current relations between the US and the South Asian states, US-India, US-Pakistan and US-Afghanistan relations are explained in the first stage. In the next stage,

[1] Ted Hopf, "Polarity, The Offense Defense Balance, and War," *The American Political Science Review* Vol. 85, No. 2 (June 1991), p. 475.

the relations between India, Pakistan and Afghanistan are discussed while simultaneously referring to US interests, approaches and options. Finally, the probable options for cooperation are highlighted in the conclusion.

Patterns of Polarity

A state may be regarded as a 'Pole' if it surpasses others in terms of size of territory and population, natural resources, economic, political and military power and ability to exercise influence beyond its territorial domain. 'Polarity' is simply understood as distribution of power among states. More specifically as it is conceptualised and understood in the discipline of IR, it primarily suggests concentration of states with varying powers into global arrangements which signify commonality of political ideologies, economic interests and military strategies. Moreover, a concentration of states around the most powerful and hegemonic state is also referred to as polarisation.[2] During the Cold War years, the two competing ideologies appeared as Communism/Socialism on the one hand; and as Democratic Capitalism on the other. Both had their specific interests and strategies, such as creation of two poles or Centres supported and strengthened by respectively allied states creating spheres of interests or composed of Peripheries.[3] Bipolarity and Cold War represented the two contending poles engaged in measures short of war, crises management, a general policy of non-cooperation, proxy wars and various patterns of balance of power exercised as a consequence of the proliferation of tactical and strategic weapons. The terms such as

[2] David P Rapkin, William R Thompson and Jon A Christopherson, "Bipolarity and Bipolarisation in the Cold War Era: Conceptualisation, Measurement, and Validation," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 23, No.2 (June 1979), p. 261.

[3] Johan Galtung, "A Structural Theory of Imperialism," *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 8, No. 2 (1971), pp. 81-85.

client state, containment, deterrence, structural imperialism, mutually assured destruction, long peace and nuclear alarmism developed specific perceptions and induced particular reactions among powerful and less powerful states. These specific state policies suggested that bipolarity had authenticated an acceptance of the military dominance and superiority of relative poles and their ability to annihilate adversaries.

The theoretic and strategic constructs such as deterrence and enduring peace appeared objective among state leaders. The notion of security was gradually dominated by a balance of terror rationalising the huge investment in military infrastructure. However, the disintegration of USSR not only questioned this logic, it also highlighted a significant deficiency in the theorisations about the Cold War and bipolarity.

The end of bipolarity, however, led to a relative euphoria of 'the unipolar moment'[4] and 'end of history'[5] and the promise of a New World Order. It also led to US' grand strategy transforming[6] and evolving, as well as US policymakers' plans for restructuring the global order, as a sequel to the Liberal Economic International Order of the post- World War II era. The early 1990s exhibited the rise of discourses on the global hegemonic role of the US with a resonance of previous concepts such as hegemonic stability, along with relatively low profile policies and disengagement with peripheries and allies.

4 Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 70, No. 1 (America and the World 1990/1991), pp. 23-33.

5 Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and The Last Man* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).

6 John Lewis Gaddis, "A Grand Strategy of Transformations," *Foreign Policy* (November/December 2002), pp. 50-57.

This era also witnessed undermining of the United Nations (UN), especially regarding its role in preventing war.[7]

The primary question that may be posed regarding the post-Cold War multipolarity is: does it minimise the risks of nuclear war and mutual annihilation and present greater possibilities/chances of cooperation between states as well as amicable resolutions of conflicts? The mainstream and structural and neorealist's image of a multipolar world presents the US, Russia and China as major powers capable of bringing significant change. According to this perspective, strategic confrontation remains between the US and Russia (which may be observed in Crimea, Ukraine and Syria), while the US and China appear to compete as well as cooperate economically. Neorealists further argue that the disintegration of USSR and nature of confrontation between the US and Russia has compelled China to rethink its interests and cooperate with the former; despite the fact that during the Cold War bipolarity, the US and China were hostile antagonists. Drawing further from the same assumptions the neorealists further argue that in case China rises to the status of a dominant geoeconomic and military power capable of challenging US hegemony; Russia is likely to ally with it to contain China.[8] On the contrary, globalists and peace research thinkers consider global movements such as anti-war, environmental preservation and feminism affecting state agendas. Moreover, they view multipolarity as an octagonal structure with poles such as Latin America, the US, Russia, China, India, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the European Union (EU) and Africa; as well as global civilisations such as Western Liberal, Western Marxist, Muslim/Islamic, Buddhist,

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7 Charles Krauthammer, "Let It Sink," *The New Republic*, 24 August 1987, pp. 18-23.

8 John J Mearsheimer's interview to Timofey Bordachev, Valdai Discussion Club, Centre for Comprehensive European and International Studies, National Research University, Higher School of Economics, 18 January 2017.

Japanese and Chinese. The economic goals are minimum income for every individual, free education and basic facilities. The political goal is the organisation of around 200 states, which comprise around 2000 nationalities; therefore a political organisation may be attained by creating federations inside states with multiple nations and confederations in between. The military goal is the criminalisation of war as a means of policy, as incidents of war have overall been minimised, although the US and Israel are two exceptions. The cultural goal is dialogue of civilisations. The social goal is liberation of marginalised people and global identity.[9] Considering the nature of post-Cold War multipolarity from both sides of the ideational continuum, the US appears to acknowledge the need to reassess its national interests and engage with the remaining greater powers and regional states and resort to strategies of conflict resolution and promotion of regional trade. The Neo-Marxists observe the emergence of a global Wall Street System[10] extending the influence of US' domestic entrepreneurs and Wall Street globally. Furthermore, the discourse from the cosmopolitans include suggestions of the rise of a 'multitude'[11] in the form of a global civil society and evolving global movements. The nature of power, war, alliances and cooperation in such a multipolar world has significantly affected the US' grand strategy.

9 Johan Galtung, "Transition from a Unipolar to a Multipolar Octagonal World Order," Lecture on World Public Forum's Dialogue of Civilisations, 17 February 2015.

10 Peter Gowan, *Global Gamble: Washington's Faustian Bid for World Dominance* (London: Verso, 1999).

11 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2004).

The US and South Asia

US-India Relations

The US' extension of its alliance across the globe can be traced to the notions of off-shore balancing[12] and sub-imperialism.[13] A sub-imperial state may be classified as a regional capitalist state. India's status has also been explained from the perspective of it being a member of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS); where BRICS states appear despite being seen as promoting global economic integration, instead have promoted neoliberal and imperialist agendas and policies that demand accumulation of capital, unlimited extraction of natural resources and expansion of markets and advanced capitalism across the globe.[14] The US and India have developed a strategic alliance, especially since the US-India Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2008, under which the US offered civil nuclear cooperation to India in return for the latter placing all its civil nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) exchanges and inspection. The expansion of security and geoeconomic networks across Europe, and search for strategic and corporate allies to support US military-related industry, strongly resonates in official documents, statements as well as policies and priorities of the US administrations and are outlined in the Quadrennial Defence Review (QDR) 2014, which emphasises creating global security as its second pillar of defence strategy. This also implies collaborating with strategic and economic partners to achieve

[12] Christopher Layne, "From Preponderance to Offshore Balancing: America's Future Grand Strategy," *International Security* Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 86-124.

[13] Patrick Bond, "Bankrupt Africa: Imperialism, Sub-imperialism and the Politics of Finance," *Historical Materialism* Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 145-172.

[14] Patrick Bond, "BRICS and the Tendency to Sub-imperialism," *Pambazuka News*, 10 April 2014, https://www.pambazuka.org/governance/brics-and-tendency-sub-imperialism.

common (geoeconomic and corporate) goals. The Asia-Pacific alliances including Australia, Japan, Philippines, Republic of Korea and Thailand are expected to expand with the inclusion of Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore and India. By signing the Defence Technology Trade Initiative (DTTI), the US and India are developing a geostrategic and entrepreneurial alliance and partnership.[15] Through military industrial and corporate cooperation, the US appears to promote India as a regional economic and military power in South Asia. India has renewed its alliance and arms procurement from Russia with presently 70 per cent of its defence technology from there, and hence attaining the status of the largest international importer of tactical weapons. India has developed an indigenous production programme called 'Make in India', and here the US support remains necessary, especially through co-production projects, which will also eventually involve technology transfer. India and the US have signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) in 2002, Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016, Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018 and plan to sign the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA).[16]

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[15] Bryan Mabee, "From 'Liberal War' to 'Liberal Militarism': United States Security Policy as Promotion of Military Modernity," *Critical Military Studies* Vol. 2, No. 3 (2016), pp. 18-20.

[16] GSOMIA is expected to enable the sharing of military intelligence between the two countries and requires each country to protect the others' classified information. LEMOA permits the military of either country to use the other's bases for re-supplying or carrying out repairs. The agreement does not make the provision of logistical support binding on either country, and requires individual clearance for each request. COMCASA is an India-specific variant of Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) that enables the two countries to share secure communication and exchange information on approved equipment during bilateral and multinational training exercises and operations. BECA permits the exchange of unclassified and controlled unclassified geospatial products, topographical, nautical, and aeronautical data, products and services between India and the US National

US-Pakistan Relations

Since the beginning of the US War on Terror in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the US have experienced cooperation as well as disagreement. The war in Afghanistan and pursuit of al-Qaeda and Taliban through drones became one of the most significant irritants, while the Salala incident worsened relations, leading to Pakistan blocking NATO's supplies to Afghanistan. As a reaction, the US reconsidered its assistance (National Defence Authorisation Act, 18 May 2012) and sought to coerce Pakistan to aggressively fight militants in its tribal areas, which had significant repercussions for the latter, and further intensified confrontation between the two states. The US discontinued military training of Pakistan Armed Forces personnel and the Coalition Support Fund. The country was placed on the 'grey list' by the FATF in June 2018. The rift was further worsened by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's statement warning the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of providing any financial assistance to Pakistan if it will be utilised in repaying loans from China under the CPEC projects. The statement had been regarded as Washington's response to Beijing's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, which includes the USD 62 billion CPEC package. However, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi addressed the US' concerns, stating that China is not burdening Pakistan with loans while engaging in projects for CPEC.

US-Afghanistan Relations

One of the debates in the broader discourse on multipolarity among the US academia, and subsequently, resonating in the policies of US

Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA). After a surplus of USD 7 billion in mutual trade recently, the US has allowed India's Agricultural and Process Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) to certify Indian products to the standards of the US Department of Agriculture.

policymakers is the use of terms such as 'failed', 'collapsing' and 'rogue' states. As opposed to the unipolar world, the multipolar world did not pose a threat of mutual nuclear annihilation to the greater power, and war is seen as a policy to promote global liberal agendas. The liberal internationalist, cosmopolitan and neoconservative advocacy for war to fix the 'failing', 'collapsing'[17] and 'rogue' states also appeared in *Fixing Failed States*[18] by President Ashraf Ghani, co-authored with Clare Lockhart, and have played a significant role in the manner in which the US has employed war, tried to introduce neoliberal reform, and subsequently, accept the gradually increasing role of privatised military firms in war-torn Afghanistan. The outcomes of US war and occupation of Afghanistan suggest that these discourses have viewed the problem from a perspective that suggests a compulsion to use war to liberate the such states. Liberal reforms in Afghanistan and Iraq have not produced the dividends expected,[19] and the US has realised the importance of negotiating with all the factions and actors in Afghanistan.

Regional Dynamics and Role of the US

Indo-Pakistan Relations

The present Pakistan government has extended Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). However, India appears not to reciprocate in the same spirit. According to World Bank figures, current trade between India and Pakistan is estimated at less than USD 2 billion, while

[17] I. William Zartman, *Collapsed States: Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (London: Laynne Reiner Publishers, 2005).

[18] Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[19] Elaheh Rostami-Povey, *Afghan Women: Identity and Invasion* (London: Zed Books, 2007); and Najde Al-Ali and Nicola Pratt, *What Kind of Liberation: Woman and Occupation of Iraq* (London: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Pakistan has the potential to increase trade with India to USD 37 billion; and with South Asian states to USD 67 billion from USD 23 billion. Informal trade between Pakistan and India is estimated at close to USD 5-6 billion. Significant factors for increasing trade are geographical proximity, language and GDP.[20] For initiating mutual trade, India may expect Pakistan to reciprocate and grant it Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status. Pakistan came close to doing so in 2013, which was renamed Non-Discriminatory Market Access (NDMA). Ideally, India may expect to utilise the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) to transport Indian goods to Afghanistan. Given unresolved issues lingering between the two states, India and Pakistan are likely to find it difficult to promote bilateral trade.

However, if trade is to be regarded as the engine of growth in the domestic economies of the South Asian states as well as a source of creating competition, specialisation, enhanced quality of exportable goods, creation of massive profits and foreign exchange surpluses and reinvestment; then perhaps China, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan may benefit more from multilateral trade agreements based on the 'country of origin standards'. The current US administration appears to prefer 'country of origin standards', labour provisions and access of agricultural producers to regional markets as it may be observed in Trump administration's new deal to replace the North Atlantic Free Trade Area (NAFTA) by promoting the United States Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA) promulgated after the G-20 Summit in Buenos Aires in 2018. While China has already assisted Pakistan by initiating

[20] Sanjay Kathuria (ed.), *A Glass Half Full: The Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia*, South Asia Development Forum, World Bank Group, Washington D.C., 2018, pp. 1-24; and, Mubarik Zeb Khan, "Pak-India Trade Much Below Trade Potential: World Bank," *Dawn*, 6 December 2018, https://www.dawn.com/news/1449784.

CPEC; the US is likely to benefit from promoting multilateral trade in South Asia by exercising its influence, especially in global trade institutions. The US and China have developed a relation of cooperation since the latter's inclusion into the World Trade Organisation (WTO). China receives Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and its Sovereign Wealth Fund manages reinvestment of foreign exchange reserves and investments in bonds and funds in the international market as well as US' domestic financial and entrepreneurial organisations. CPEC can provide infrastructure for Pakistan to utilise the Chinese model of generating foreign exchange reserves and investing in the international market. Pakistan, therefore, needs to plan ahead and learn from the US and China and develop its own Sovereign Wealth Fund. The proposition by Pakistan to initially trade with China in its own currency appears the right first tender step towards monetary stability, production and trade.

Pak-Afghan Relations

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have soured since the US war began, although in July 2010 signing of the APTTA appeared as a positive indication. Bilateral trade and relatively lower costs of transit increased Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan to a record USD 2.4 billion in 2012, but fell to less than USD 1 billion due to deteriorating relations between the two states, and frequent border closures and stoppage of NATO supplies through Pakistan. Afghanistan's transit trade through Karachi has lowered and faces risk of further reductions in case India and Afghanistan agree on transit and trade through the Chabahar Port in Iran, which is funded by India.[21] The US and China

[21] Rahimullah Yusufzai, "Determination Needed to Improve Pakistani-Afghan Relations," *Arab News*, 21 February 2018, http://www.arabnews.com/node/1251376.

may be able to play a role in including Iran in future trade-related negotiations between Pakistan, India and Afghanistan.

If Chaman-Kandahar-Herat railway line and Peshawar-Kabul motorway becomes functional and Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline and Central Asia-South Asia CASA-1000 projects are developed, then, these may realise the potential of South and Central Asian regions by providing shortest access through the Gwadar and Karachi ports. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) agreed in 2018 sets the framework to strengthen relations, particularly on mutual security and economic issues.

Indo-Afghan Relations

Since 2006 India and Afghanistan have signed three MoUs for Indian assistance in rural development, education as well as standardisation between the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and Afghan National Standardisation Authority (ANSA). An agreement providing USD 50 million to promote bilateral business between Afghanistan and India was signed during the visit of the Afghan Foreign Minister R.D. Spanta in 2006. Since then, India has been providing aid to Afghanistan up to USD 750 million. India's investments in Afghanistan include iron ore extraction with expectations to produce six metric tonnes per annum, along with establishment of a steel production plant, an 800-megawatts power plant. India has also supported the reconstruction of Salma Dam in the Herat province; as well as constructed a new Parliament complex for the Afghan government.[22] It has begun scholarship programmes for Afghan

[22] Anjana Paricha, "India and Afghanistan Open Air Freight Corridor to Bypass Pakistan," *Voice of America*, 21 June 2017, https://www.voanews.com/a/india-afghanistan-air-freight-corridor-opens/3909537.html.

students; increased assistance for the Indira Gandhi Hospital in Kabul (established 1969) since 2004; and has seven consulates in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The evidence of multipolarity in current International Relations has accentuated the need for minimising incidents of war, initiating negotiations and promoting trade between developing states. The options for negotiation, conflict resolution and regional multilateral trade capitalising on economic power and promoting exchange of tradable goods according to 'country of origin standards' in South Asia may be explored if major powers such as the US, China and Russia affectively exercise their influence in global financial and trade regulating institutions. The nature of post-Cold War multipolarity demands that the US reassess its interests and engage with the other great powers and regional states, especially for conflict resolution and promotion of regional trade.■

Russia and South Asia: Putin's 'Look East Policy'

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Abstract

Putin's 'Look East Policy' was formally announced in 2010. While there are multiple explanations prompting Russia to refocus on the East, the domineering role of President Putin in the country's foreign policy formulation cannot be underestimated. For better understanding of this policy, the paper identifies six theoretical explanations augmented through contextual analysis of Russia's foreign policy in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 scenario. The paper argues that understanding Putin's 'Look East Policy' requires comprehension and assessment of what is outlined in Russia's official documents and what is actually implemented. In the context of South Asia, the paper raises the question of whether Pakistan should be wary of Russia's new resurgent interest in Afghanistan and particularly queries the former's eastward policy vis-à-vis South Asia. It argues that given US preeminence in the region, Moscow has carefully adopted the 'wait and see approach' to see how the US' romance with the region will end. Hence, the paper submits that Russia's 'Look East Policy', particularly in South Asia, will be selective and country-specific - Moscow will not compromise its relations with one country for another; it will be driven by need, necessity, and priority. In the context of major regional actors, striking a balance between New Delhi and Islamabad will be problematic for Moscow just as it has been for Washington.

Introduction

The end of the Cold War was not just the dawn of a new era, it engendered the lifting of an ideological layer and eventually turned out to be the renaissance of leadership in the Russian Federation. President Vladimir Putin rose to the pinnacle of power and became the symbol of Russia's resurgence and power in global politics. Since 1999, when he succeeded Boris Yeltsin as the President of Russia, Putin has not just been reshaping and resetting Russia's power structure, but rebuilding an empire which supposedly died with time.[1] His 'Look East Policy' is arguably part of a larger geopolitical scheme and 'is largely consistent with historical Russian (and Soviet) thinking about security interests and foreign policy.'[2] This geopolitical analysis of Russia tallies with Stratfor assessments.[3] While historical factors play a significant role in understanding the external propensity and actions of Russia, those alone do not capture the entire picture. The political re-assertiveness and clout of President Putin over the last several years demonstrates his idiosyncrasy and domineering leadership style in the country's foreign policy on the one hand, and parades him as riding on Russia's economic growth.[4]

Long before the end of the Cold War, Russia was an important player in the East. Moscow's influence in the region went beyond supporting

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1 "A Chronology of Russia from Yeltsin's Fall through Putin's Rise," *Stratfor Worldview*, 20 July 2014, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/chronology-russia-yeltsins-fall-through-putins-rise.

2 Olga Oliker, Christopher S. Chivvis, Keith Crane, Olesya Tkacheva, and Scott Boston, "Russian Foreign Policy in Historical and Current Context: A Reassessment," *RAND Perspective* Vol. 144 (2015), pp. 1-32.

3 "The Geopolitics of Russia: Permanent Struggle," *Stratfor Worldview*, 15 April 2012, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/geopolitics-russia-permanent-struggle.

4 Olga Oliker et al. "Russian Foreign Policy in Historical and Current Context," pp. 8-9.

pro-Russia or socialist governments ideologically, but include diplomatic and socioeconomic cooperation. While the end of the Cold War resultantly dwindled Russia's influence, conversely, it was Putin's rise and leadership which translated into regaining his country's lost influence in the region, more importantly, amidst the growing preeminence of China. Russia is, thereby, returning to the region and entering a game, where China is hoping to repeat the 'Flying Geese Model', though not without regional reservations and contestation.[5]

Putin's 'Look East Policy' should be seen through the lens of the strands and competition within Moscow's policymaking circle in post-Cold War Russia. The three strands (Liberal Westernism, Fundamental Nationalism, and Pragmatic Nationalism) envision Russia differently, but not without a certain degree of intersection. While the Pragmatic Nationalist espouses a balanced vision for Russia's foreign policy, the latter two believe Russia is relevant as ever and not ill-prepared to rebrand itself and mark its niche in the evolving globalised world.[6] President Putin's 'Look East Policy' arguably resonates with the latter two.

Prior to the official announcement of Putin's 'Look East Policy', Russia's eastward policy has always been primarily China-centric. For fear of living in its shadow and being seen as a junior dependent partner, Putin's Kremlin opted for a broader policy that spans from Southeast to South Asia till the Middle East. Since 2010, when Putin's

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[5] Vladimir N. Kolotov, *Main Trends of Russia's Foreign Policy in Transforming East and Southeast Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute, 2008), https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/main-trends-of-russias-foreign-policy-in-transforming-east-and-southeast-asia/.

[6] Volha Charnysh, *Russia and Ukrainian Denuclearization: Foreign Policy under Boris Yeltsin* (Northhampton: Department of Government of Smith College, April 2008), p.32, http://charnysh.net/Documents/Charnysh_Volha_HonorsProject.pdf.

'Look East Policy' was formally announced, it has placed significant emphasis on the 'exceptional economic growth displayed by China and India'[7] and accords importance to the emerging economies of Asia-Pacific and South Asia.[8] Countries in these regions constitute a sizeable proportion of the Post-China16 (PC16)[9] economies identified by George Friedman.[10] Caught between the cobweb of US and China competition in East and Southeast Asia, Russia's strategy in the region transcends mere rivalry of great powers, and is aimed at maintaining the status quo; balance of forces between major powers; renewing ties with traditional allies; and creating an energy niche in an energy net importing region.[11] Geopolitics pundits would further argue that the impetus for Russia's 'Look East Policy' was Moscow's urge to lessen dependence on the West, get relief from the failing oil prices, and to seek markets through multilateral trade deals and cooperation for the pressurised Russian energy and military hardware economy.[12] Adding to the discourse, Alexander Lukin does not dispute the Sino-centrism that has long shaped Russia's relations in the region, though he added that the relations are predicated on achieving 'international order, based on the idea of global multipolarism…favouring the current system of international law' through a promising international

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7 Shelly Mahajan, "The Changing Nature of Russia's Engagement in South Asia," South Asia Program, Hudson Institute, 20 March 2018, http://www.southasiaathudson.org/blog/2018/3/20/the-changing-nature-of-russias-engagement-in-south-asia.

8 Ian Storey, "What Russia's 'Turn to the East' Means for Southeast Asia," *Perspective*, ISEAS, Vol. 67 (2015), pp.1-10.

9 Economies based on low-cost and increasingly becoming export-oriented hubs.

10 George Friedman, "The PC16: Identifying China's Successors," *Stratfor Geopolitical Weekly*, 30 July 2013, https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/pc16-identifying-chinas-successors.

11 Ibid.

12 Himani Pant, "The Changing Contours of Russia's South Asia Policy," Observer Research Foundation, 27 July 2017; and Storey, "What Russia's 'Turn to the East' Means for Southeast Asia."

organisation like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) under the banner of the United Nations.[13]

Putin's 'Look East Policy' is very important and deserves broader understanding, particularly in two parallel contexts. First, it resonates with Russia's foreign economic policy which not only aims at enabling a favourable economic outlook, but to also mark a niche for itself in the increasing globalised economy. Hence, tapping into the foreign market (Eastern market) that transcends countries once under Russia's sphere of influence are calculated policy-driven moves by the Putin administration to ensure socioeconomic and political stability (at home) for maintaining considerably high approval among the growing Russian middle class. Second, Western powers have a long tradition of engaging countries the world over.

If the West has majestically romanced with semi-autocratic, semi-democratic, and autocratic regimes in different parts of the world, and if Russia chooses to tread the same path, should its action generate any serious concerns? While Russia under Putin is striving to reap the dividends of globalisation and reasserting Russian influence, eastward looking is likely to generate a certain degree of reservation and irritation. Of late, certain Western countries consider Moscow's machinations as threats to their sovereign integrity,[14] hence, the

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[13] Alexander Lukin, "Russia's Asian Policy," Chatham House, 7 February 2012, https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Russia%20and%20Eurasia/070212summary.pdf.

[14] Pippa Crerar, Jon Henley and Patrick Wintour, "Russia Accused of Cyber Attack on Chemical Weapons Watchdog," *The Guardian*, 4 October 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/04/netherlands-halted-russian-cyber-attack-on-chemical-weapons-body; Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "How Russia Cyber-Attacks helped Trump to the US Presidency," *The Guardian*, 22 October 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/oct/22/russia-cyber-theft-trump-us-election-president-clinton; Dustin Volz and Timothy Gardner, "In a First, the US blames Russia for Cyber Attacks on Energy Grid," *Reuters*, 15 March

question whether the containment of Russia is still a possibility.[15] While Russia would reject such threat insinuation, its hegemonic display (in Ukraine, Eurasian Economic Union, Syria, Montenegro) beyond the former Soviet space, raises geopolitical and geostrategic concerns and reasons to assume that Moscow is either resurrecting her Cold War status or bent at redefining her position in the ever growing global political landscape.[16]

Looking into the larger canvas of Putin's 'Look East Policy', it might not be too hard to fathom that Moscow is reassessing its relationships with a number of countries in the Middle East, Southeast, and South Asia. The long established relationships with Syria and Iran have been subjected to different forms of geopolitical dilemmas. Steering the Syrian crisis, protecting Bashar al-Assad's presidency, and maintaining Iran's nuclear status under the framework of international consensus satiates Russia's Middle East policy.[17] Hence, it is pertinent to pay serious attention to Russia's larger eastward policy, particularly the aspect of South Asia, which is geared at

2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-russia-sanctions-energygrid/in-a-first-u-s-blames-russia-for-cyber-attacks-on-energy-grid-idUSKCN1GR2G3; Joshua Berlinger and Nina dos Santos, "UK Blames Russian Military for 'Reckless' Cyber Attacks," *CNN.com*, 4 October 2018, https://edition.cnn.com/2018/10/03/uk/uk-russia-cyber-attacks-intl/index.html.

15 Benyamin Poghosyan, "Is Russia's Containment Still Possible," *Stratfor Worldview*, 16 February 2018, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russias-containment-still-possible.

16 Arshad Mahmood and Umar Baloch, "Enhancement of Russian Interests in South Asia during Putin's Era," *Margalla Papers* (2013), p. 54.

17 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016," http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

ensuring that events in the latter do not constitute great and direct threat to its national and security interest.[18]

Why South Asia?

Moscow's increasing romance with South Asian countries is not an isolated development, rather emanates from the National Security Strategy (NSS) of the Russian Federation 2020,[19] and the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (FPCRF). Both documents clearly assert that Russia must act and respond to the 'new threats and risks for the development of the individual, society and the state' and must act as guarantor of safe national development through state policy in the field of national security.[20] On the premise of the NSS, it requires no hard logic to understand Russia's global behaviour, which is arguably geared at consolidating its influence within and beyond the post-Soviet space.

Russia's South Asia policy should be understood and judged between what Moscow says and does, though the policy rationale is 'in full recognition of the fundamentally new geopolitical situation in the world.'[21] The 'Look East Policy' is one of the manifestations of the Russian Federation's understanding and response to global politics. Seemingly, it reckons with the Russian NSS that strongly believes that

[18] Uzair Younus "Pay Attention to Russia's South Asia Strategy," *The Diplomat*, 7 June 2018, https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/pay-attention-to-russias-south-asia-strategy/.

[19] Presidential Administration of Russia 2018, "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020," 13 May 2009, http://www.kremlin.ru/ref_notes/424.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the European Union, "Russian Foreign Policy," https://russiaeu.ru/en/russian-foreign-policy.

'Russia must implement systemic measures to respond to the changing situation in the world.'[22]

Like every major power, Russia takes a premium in being part of the players who control and benefit from major water passages. South Asia is indisputably surrounded by important ocean and sea routes (Indian Ocean and Arabia Sea) that are clearly and understandably important for Russia's national interest and security as documented in the Maritime Doctrine of the Russian Federation.[23] In a larger context, its increasing prominence in the region is aimed at overcoming the emerging stagnation in relations with India. Moscow also believes it can employ its good offices and neighbourhood for preventing confrontation between India and China in Asia and the Indian Ocean.

According to the NSS, President Putin rejects any insinuation that Russia will take a lukewarm attitude towards global affairs. While addressing regional issues, the document under Articles 11 and 18, specifically underlines South Asia as one of the seats of global tension. Hence, 'Look East' is rooted in calculated strategy and mission.

> 11. International attention to the long-term perspective will be focused on the possession of energy sources, including in the Middle East, on the shelf of the Barents Sea and in other areas of the Arctic, in the Caspian Sea basin and in

[22] Roger McDermott, *Russia's 2015 National Security Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, January 2016), https://jamestown.org/program/russias-2015-national-security-strategy/.

[23] Centre for Strategic Assessment and Forecasts, "Maritime Doctrine of Russian Federation 2020, approved by the decree of Vladimir Putin, President Russian Federation, July 27, 2001, Pr-1387," http://csef.ru/en/politica-i-geopolitica/510/morskaya-doktrina-rossijskoj-federaczii-na-period-do-2020-goda-7984.

> Central Asia. The situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, conflicts in the Middle East, in a number of countries in South Asia and Africa, on the Korean Peninsula will continue to have a negative impact on the international situation in the medium term.
>
> 18. The practice of overthrowing legitimate political regimes and provoking intrastate instability and conflicts is becoming increasingly widespread. In addition to the persisting seats of tension in the Near and Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and the Korean peninsula, new 'hot spots' are emerging, and zones that are not controlled by any states' authorities are expanding. Territories affected by armed conflicts are becoming the basis for the spread of terrorism, interethnic strife, religious enmity, and other manifestations of extremism. The emergence of the terrorist organization calling itself Islamic State and the strengthening of its influence is the result of the policy of double standards to which some states adhere in the sphere of the fight against terrorism. [24]

South Asia glaringly marks a niche in most of Russia's official documents. This underwrites the importance of the region to Russian policymakers, particularly to President Putin, who does not consider South Asia as a far-flung neighbour, rather a proximal neighbourhood. In Russia's strategy calculation, political instability and conflicts in South Asia carry negative ramifications not just for the neighbourhood, but for international security and for Russia's security interest in the short and long-term:[25]

[24] Presidential Administration of Russia 2018, "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020."

[25] Petr Topychkanov, "Russian Policy on India and South Asia," Carnegie Moscow Centre's Nonproliferation Programme, 27 February 2013, https://carnegie.ru/2013/02/27/russian-policy-on-india-and-south-asia-pub-51283.

Other than India and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran are the two other Islamic countries within the neighbourhood of South Asia mentioned in Article 97:

> 97. The persisting instability in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan after the withdrawal of all but a few international contingents poses a major security threat to Russia and other members of the CIS. The Russian Federation, together with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, other interested States and relying on the possibilities offered by the UN, CIS, CSTO, SCO and other international organizations will be consistent in its efforts to resolve as soon as possible the problems this country is facing, while respecting rights and legitimate interests of all ethnic groups living in its territory so that it can enter post-conflict recovery as a sovereign, peaceful, neutral State with a sustainable economy and political system. Implementing comprehensive measures to mitigate the terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan against other States, including neighbouring countries, as well as eliminate or substantially reduce illicit production and trafficking of narcotic drugs is an integral part of these efforts. Russia is committed to further intensifying UN-led international efforts aimed at helping the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and its neighbouring States counter these challenges.[26]

The Dynamic of Post-9/11

The 'Look East Policy' exposes the political dynamics in the region in many ways. One, it unveils that Russia is not a dead polar bear, it can

[26] Presidential Administration of Russia 2018, "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020."

still roar and make an impact even in areas that have undergone a great deal of US influence. Two, the policy enunciates the strategic motives of Moscow in instrumentalising certain countries in the region for maintaining leverage over the US and the West. This is true for Indo-Russia relations irrespective of the dimensions Indo-US relations have taken since the end of the Cold War. New Delhi will always be prudent and cautious about making perilous decisions that could undermine either Moscow's interest or jeopardise her strategic cooperation and interest with the West, particularly Washington. Three, the policy highlights the importance of some countries for Russia's commercial interest. Apart from being the top buyer of Russian weapons, New Delhi equally holds the status of being its second largest trade partner across the Middle East and South Asia. No country in South Asia comes ahead of India in terms of trade and commerce with Russia. According to the data of the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, trade volume between the two stands at around USD 7.83 billion, which is conspicuously less than the USD 132 billion trade volume between the US and India.[27] Table 1 indicates this from 2009-10 till 2016:

[27] Himani Pant, "India-Russia Economic and Energy Cooperation: The Way Ahead," Observer Research Foundation, 7 June 2017, https://www.orfonline.org/research/india-russia-economic-and-energy-cooperation-the-way-ahead/.

Table-1
Total Imports From and Exports to Russia
(USD Million)

Year	Total Imports	Total Imports from Russia	Total Exports	Total Exports to Russia
2009-10	288,372	3,566	178,751	980,69
2010-11	369,769	3,600	249,816	1,689
2011-12	489,31	4,764	305,964	1,778
2012-13	490,736	4,231	300,400	2,296
2013-14	450,199	3,894	314,405	2,121
2014-15	448,033	4,249	310,338	2,097
2015-16	381,006	4,585	262,290	1,588

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, "Export Import Databank," http://commerce.gov.in/EIDB.aspx.

Four, the policy re-echoes Lord Palmerstone's understanding of international affairs. The British Prime Minister was associated with 'states have no permanent friends or enemies, but only permanent interests.' It is true that regardless of the consequent animosity between Pakistan and Russia at the end of the Afghan war, interests override sentiments. The instrumental role of Pakistan in purging Russia out of Afghanistan remains an indelible historical fact, yet the unfolding Pakistan-Russia relations corroborate and underscore Lord Palmerstone's sentiment and demonstrates how interest shapes and reshapes relations amongst states.

Indo-Russia Relations

India remains an indisputable big brother of the region in many respects. It has a long history of partnership with Russia. At the dawn of independence, the geopolitical reality in the region presented India the premise to ally with the Soviets. The nexus of Sino-Pakistan and Pakistan-US strategic cooperation on the one hand, Indian leadership's disposition for socialist agenda and Sino-India unfriendliness on the other, incentivised a perfect alliance between the Soviet Union and India, even when the latter claims to be one of the forerunners of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM), which was against global ideological polarisation and imperialism.

The India-Russia relationship is, undoubtedly, a reflection of protracted bilateral cooperation. Successive Russian policy towards the region demonstrates the depth of the cooperation. Russian President Brezhnev believes 'Russia evolved its South Asian policy with India as an epicentre.'[28] The Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971, and Moscow support for India during the 1971 war between India and Pakistan, remain an ineffaceable part of Indo-Russia ties.[29]

Despite collapse of the Soviet Union and its unceremonious purge from the region, particularly its exit from Afghanistan, Moscow's sway in the region has never evaporated. Through sustained Indo-Russia relations, Moscow has kept itself alive, and hence, any discussion of

[28] Mishra K. Pramod, "The Soviet Union in South Asia," *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs* Vol. 3, No. ½ (June, December 1990), p.2.

[29] Mahmood and Baloch "Enhancement of Russian Interests in South Asia during Putin's Era," and, Mahajan, "The Changing Nature of Russia's Engagement in South Asia."

Putin's 'Look East Policy' is rooted in the annals of the region's history.[30]

At the dawn of the Twenty-First Century, Indo-Russia cooperation reached a new height in the form of strategic partnership that later morphed into a 'special and privileged partnership' in 2010.[31] To demonstrate the latter, Russia believes India is worthy of accession to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), despite the unblemished reservations of China and Pakistan against New Delhi's ascension.[32]

Russia is the main supplier of weapons to many countries and India is on top of the list. For time to time, Russia will continue to have a salient preponderance in the Indian arms market at a rapid scale to an extent that the US and other weapon exporters would have to muster sizeable effort to match it in the Indian arms economy. Therefore, Russia's 'Look East Policy' and particularly Indo-Russia relations will be shaped by prudence and caution - losing the Indian market will be tantamount to a huge loss and will have a severe impact on Russian defence industry.[33]

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[30] Stratfor Worldview, "Russia's Interests in the Middle East and South Asia," 12 November 2012, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russias-interests-middle-east-and-south-asia.

[31] Ashok Sajjanhar, "Time to Rejuvenate the India-Russia Partnership," Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, 30 May 2016, https://idsa.in/idsacomments/rejuvenate-india-russia-partnership_asajjanhar_300516.

[32] Jayanth Jacob, "India Seeks Russia's Help in New Bid to Enter Nuclear Suppliers Group," *Hindustan Times*, 27 August 2018, https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-seeks-russia-s-help-in-new-bid-to-enter-nuclear-suppliers-group/story-fHEeRPJ8H5remsDfBfox8K.html.

[33] Stratfor Worldview, "How Losing India's Business Could Ruin Russia's Defense Industry," 27 January 2016, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/how-losing-indias-business-could-ruin-russias-defense-industry?login=1.

Russia has promised New Delhi unadulterated relations, irrespective of the unfolding realities in the region.[34] Indo-Russia cooperation has never been confined to arms sale and has been a multifaceted cooperation. Both countries have steadily worked together at the global and regional level. At the UN, Russia has been an advocate of India's bid for permanent membership of the Security Council.[35] Similarly, Russia's support for India's accession to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is part of a larger strategy for balancing the equation of power within the Organisation. Although this can equally be true for Pakistan vis-à-vis its relations with China. While Indo-Russia cooperation also includes collaborative efforts for containing conflict in South Asia from escalating beyond the region; under the leadership of Putin, Russia believes Indo-Russia relations can be upgraded for creating a polycentric world.[36] Such upgradation in Russia's view will open countless opportunities between the two countries and eventually a fulfilment of projects such as the North–South Corridor Project.[37]

According to the Russian NSS (and by virtue of being an integral part of BRICS), Russia accords high priority to its relation with New Delhi. Article 94 of the NSS reads 'The Russian Federation assigns the

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[34] Vijay Joshi, "No 'Tight' Military Ties with Pak, Indo-Russia Ties cannot be Diluted: Putin," *Press Trust of India*, 1 June 2017, http://www.ptinews.com/news/8758888_PTI-EXCLUSIVE--No--tight--military-ties-with-Pak--Indo-Russia-ties-cannot-bediluted--Putin.html.

[35] Mussarat Jabeen, "Indian Aspiration of Permanent Membership in the UN Security Council and American Stance," *Journal of South Asian Studies* Vol.25, No. 2 (July-December 2010), p. 243; and, "Russia Extends Support for India's NSG Bid, UNSC Seat," *The Economic Times,* 1 June 2017, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/russia-extends-support-for-indias-nsg-bid-unsc-seat/articleshow/58950278.cms.

[36] Topychkanov, "Russian Policy on India and South Asia."

[37] Russian International Affairs Council, "Russia's Foreign Policy: Looking Towards 2018: A New Cycle of Russian Foreign Policy," (2017), http://russiancouncil.ru/en/forecast2018.

privileged strategic partnership with the Republic of India an important role.'[38] Article 85 of the FPCRF unequivocally elaborates the partnership as a cooperation that matters to the Federation:

> 85. Russia is committed to further strengthening its special privileged partnership with the Republic of India based on shared foreign policy priorities, historical friendship and deep mutual trust, as well as strengthening cooperation on urgent international issues and enhancing mutually beneficial bilateral ties in all areas, primarily in trade and economy, with a focus on implementing long-term cooperation programmes approved by the two countries.[39]

In addition, Article 25 of the FPCRF places India in the bracket of regional powers having the propensity to contribute to global governance and leadership:

> 13. Russia will increase cooperation in such multilateral formats as the G8, the G20, RIC (Russia, India and China), BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China), as well as use the capabilities of other informal international institutions.
>
> 25. Russia attaches great importance to ensuring the sustainable manageability of global development, which requires collective leadership from the major States that should be representative in geographic and civilization terms and fully respect the central and coordinating role of the UN. To these ends, Russia has been expanding its ties with its partners within the Group of Twenty, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and the Republic of South

[38] Russian National Security Strategy, December 2015.
[39] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation."

> Africa), the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization), RIC (Russia, India and China) alongside other organizations and dialogue platforms.[40]

Though the two countries have registered high level of diplomatic and strategic cooperation, it has not been uninsulated from varied degree of hiccups, hence, anxiety and headlines such as 'Relations with Delhi Souring.'[41] This apprehension feeds on the growing sentiment and suspicion that the India-centric policy of Russia is dwindling, further complicated by recent developments in Pak-Russia relations and Moscow's attitude towards Afghanistan.[42]

Pakistan-Russia Relations

At the earliest stage of independence, Pakistan was faced with enormous existential threats, hence, had to device an ideological-cum-pragmatic niche in global affairs. For its survival and strategic positioning, the new state rationally decided to align closely with the US' global and regional interests. Pakistan played significant role in the strategic alliance of Cold War politics through the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). The strategic cooperation was a clear-cut policy meant to safeguard and ensure the survivability of Pakistan and by extension, cold shoulder Russia. The choice of US-led alliance over the USSR transcended the rational decision model by Pakistan's foreign policymakers, but demonstrated how the latter had to respond to the then-global wave of realpolitik. Ordinarily and understandably, the strategic alliance between the US and Pakistan in

[40] Presidential Administration of Russia 2018, "National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020."
[41] Topychkanov, "Russian Policy on India and South Asia."
[42] Pant, "The Changing Contours of Russia's South Asia Policy."

the 1950s, 1960s and even in the 1970s became an impetus for Indo-Russia relations.

Few observers argue that Pakistan's relations with Russia have always been shaped through the US and India lens.[43] While such assertion might carry some degree and semblance of truth, however, the current unfolding realities (Pakistan-Russia relations) in the region reinforces the nuance and flexibility of geopolitics. Moscow is redefining her relations with Islamabad vis-à-vis the compelling realities in Afghanistan.[44] If Pakistan was instrumental in shattering Russia's image in the region during the 1980s, the same country may be instrumental in helping it achieve its aim of improving and optimising its political, military, and economic interests, with particular reference to Afghanistan, and broadly, for South Asia.

The recent diplomatic and strategic romance between Islamabad and Moscow is generating serious concerns within and outside the region. Outside the region (particularly in Washington), Pakistan-Russia relations find convergence with China's interest in the region and beyond. It might also be construed by Washington through the prism of realignment and realisation by Islamabad for an alternative ally. Whist for India, this relationship remains on the radar of suspicion and apprehension that years of exclusive Indo-Russia affability is drawing to a close.[45]

For Pakistan, Russia's rebalancing in Asia is a welcome development, especially, amidst growing strained US-Pak relations. Both Moscow and Islamabad can harness this situation to their advantage.

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[43] Mahmood and Baloch "Enhancement of Russian Interests in South Asia during Putin's Era."
[44] Pant, "The Changing Contours of Russia's South Asia Policy."
[45] Mahajan, "The Changing Nature of Russia's Engagement in South Asia."

One, strained relations present Russia an opportunity to cautiously draw closer to Islamabad. Two, it equally offers Islamabad relief and a propensity to act beyond the shadow of Washington. Hence, growing Pak-Russia cooperation has led to the diversification of Pakistan's arms imports and cooperation. Russia's Klimov RD-93 engine is instrumental in the making of Pakistan's JF-17 Thunder aircraft.[46] The purchase of Russian-made Mi-35 attack helicopters by Pakistan further embellishes their hardware cooperation. By expanding her military hardware economy, it is argued that Moscow is assiduously trying to circumvent the pressure of sanctions placed on its economy following the Crimean annexation.

Between the two countries, the curve of defence cooperation has steadily risen. In 2014, the two inked defence cooperation during the high-level visit of the Russian Defence Minister, Sergey Shoygu to Islamabad. This was followed by the participation of Kalashnikov Concern (a Russian defense manufacturing concern and joint-stock company) in the trials of the new assault rifle for Pakistan's infantry. While in 2016, a joint and friendly military exercise held in Cherat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan became an international headline. A similar exercise 'DRUZBA-Friendship 2017' was held in Minalney Vody, Russia's North Caucasus Republic of Karachayevo-Cherkessia; followed by 'DRUZBA-Friendship 2018', in Cherat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Cooperation between the two transcends the realm of defence. It includes other significant forms of cooperation such as an economic deal signed in 2015. The USD 2 billion deal was aimed 'to develop a 1,100-kilometer gas pipeline from Karachi to Lahore — the largest

[46] Musa Khan Jalalzai, *The Afghan Intel Crisis: Satellite State: War of Interests and the Blame*-Game (New York: Algora Publishing, 2017), p.43.

economic deal between the two countries since the Soviet Union built the Pakistan Steel Mills in the 1970s.'[47] In 2013, Moscow expressed her willingness to upgrade the same Steel Mills; and was equally interested in the Muzaffargarh Power project with the intent of transforming the station from oil and gas to coal energy.[48]

At present, the trade volume between Islamabad and Moscow requires improvement. Alarmingly, Moscow has no place among the top ten export countries from Pakistan,[49] though of late, both countries have started cooperation at various levels to ensure deeper economic ties. Table 2 indicates where trade between the two countries stands:

[47] Younus "Pay Attention to Russia's South Asia Strategy."

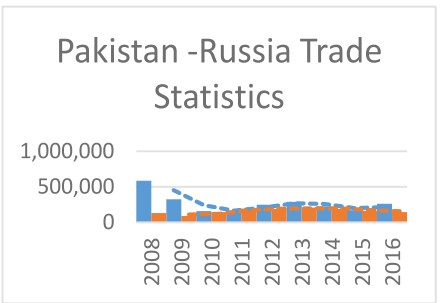
[48] Ume Farwa, "Pakistan-Russia Relations on Upward Trajectory," *Asia Times*, 17 December 2017, http://www.atimes.com/pakistan-russia-relations-upward-trajectory/.

[49] Afshan Uroos, "Pakistan's Trade Statistics: Monthly Review-July-August 2017-2018," *Trade Development Authority of Pakistan*, 5 October 2017, www.tdap.gov.pk/ppt/July-September-2017-18.

Table-2
Trade between Pakistan and Russia (2008-16)

Pakistan-Russia trade Statistics

Unit: US Dollar Thousand
Pakistan Imports from Russia
Pakistan exports to Russia



Year	Imports	Exports
2008	583,846	127,297
2009	321,687	88,827
2010	156,882	144,337
2011	165,597	191,512
2012	246,513	186,192
2013	287,758	205,510
2014	224,926	187,633
2015	170,241	160,925
2016	258,011	144,774
2017		
2018		

Source: Trade Map: Trade Statistics for International Business Development, https://www.trademap.org/Index.aspx.

Between 2008 and 2009, the direction and volume of trade depicts an imbalance, in which Pakistan had a deficit. From 2010 onward, the record shows relatively better trade relations, but still, there is much to be accomplished, in terms of creating enabling conditions for closer trade relations. The bar of mutual investment and business projects needs to be raised.

Since 2013, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is celebrated enormously because it presents Pakistan with colossal economic benefits, though more importantly, it equally underpins the

importance of Pakistan's strategic location and capacity to contribute to the global economy through its transitory vantage point.

Other than China, Russia is also cognizant and banking greatly on Pakistan's transitory niche and 'neighbourhoodness.' Pakistan shares a neighbourhood with Afghanistan and the Central Asian States which are historically and to date strategically important for Russia. This is also true for the region of China neighbouring Pakistan. By this account, the latter is the heart of the region, either for Russia or China. It is, thus, not surprising for Moscow to show interest to be part of China's BRI, and by extension gain access to the Gwadar Port, which is an essential part of CPEC.[50] Through the participation of Russia in CPEC, Pakistan-Russia cooperation might eventually be mutually cemented; and consequently lead to trilateral cooperation between China-Pakistan-Russia. The eventual alliance of the three carries huge economic and commercial advantage for all parties. The alliance might result in easing of trade barriers between Russia and Pakistan; increasing trade volume; and in due course bring Pakistan more close to Russia's market.

Strategically, should Pakistan be wary of Russia's new resurgent interest in Afghanistan? The Cold War experience between the two countries might be hard to forget,[51] but the unfolding reality (new Russo-Pak romance) would water down such apprehensions, particularly when both countries are working on lines of mutual benefit and want a peaceful Afghanistan. Pakistan would benefit from Moscow's technology and industrial help, meanwhile, Moscow will be

[50] Khalid Mustafa and Muhammad Saleh Zaafir, "Russia Allowed Use of Gwadar Port," *The News*, 26 November 2016, https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/167827-Russia-allowed-use-of-Gwadar-Port.

[51] Petr Topychkanov, "Where Does Pakistan Fit in Russia's South Asia Strategy," Carnegie Moscow Centre, 16 January 2017.

fulfilling its obsession with warm waters through the Gwadar Port.[52] In this backdrop, Pakistan will be within the bracket of countries that satiates Russia's strategic motives, while India contributes to Russia's weapons economy. Therefore, closer Islamabad-Moscow ties is neither coincidental nor Putin's novel idea.

Other than Gwadar, another strategic issue for Pakistan is the protracted Kashmir conflict. It remains a matter of further research, whether the bourgeoning Pakistan-Russia relations can mark a shift in Moscow's Kashmir policy. Pakistan will have to work arduously to convince Russia not just for a rethink, but on how best the Kashmir conflict can secure a peaceful resolution. The position of the Russian Foreign Ministry is that the *status quo* around the Line of Control (LoC) should be maintained; and neither Pakistan nor India should lose anything as per the prevailing situation.[53] Such a position is understandable and it will be hard for Moscow to throw support behind the freedom and independence of Kashmir. For Russia to counsel New Delhi on Kashmir's independence will directly challenge its position and interest in Abkhazia – Georgia, Kosovo, and Crimea where matters of autonomy and independence remain unsettled.

A comprehensive picture of Russia-South Asia policy would be wanting without understanding and judging Moscow between what is said, written, and done. Regardless of latest development in Pakistan-Russia relations, what do Russia's official documents say about Pakistan?

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[52] Ansar Jamil, "Central Asia's Quest for Warm Waters: From the Caspian Sea to Gwadar Port," *Strategic Studies* Vol. 3 (2017), p. 93.

[53] Martin Maleek, "Russian Policy towards South Asia: An Update," *Asian Survey* Vol. 44, No. 3 (May/June 2004), pp. 388-389.

While the NSS generalises the regions of tension, conversely, although the FPCRF mentions Pakistan once, it particularly associates Islamabad with the regions where global terrorist threat is imminent and Russia is not just seriously concerned, but monitoring the situation closely. Article 15 of FPCRF states:

> 15. The global terrorist threat has reached a new high with the emergence of the Islamic State international terrorist organization and similar groups that have descended to an unprecedented level of cruelty in their violence. They aspire to create their own state and seek to consolidate their influence on a territory stretching from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to Pakistan. The main effort in combating terrorism should be aimed at creating a broad international counter-terrorist coalition with a solid legal foundation, one that is based on effective and consistent inter-State cooperation without any political considerations or double standards, above all to prevent terrorism and extremism and counter the spread of radical ideas.[54]

In the interest of bourgeoning relations, both countries would have to mutually cooperate on issues of terrorism and extremism, given the intersection of development and political stability. While Russia is least interested to see conflict in the region transmigrate into its borders, it is also imperative for Islamabad to showcase itself as an economic and commercial friendly country, where the menace of insurgency and militancy would not constitute a threat to potential foreign investors.

[54] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation."

Putin's 'Look East Policy', nonetheless, presents Pakistan an opportunity to reset her foreign policy objectives and interests. The Policy should accord Pakistan a certain degree of introspection - if the latter failed to achieve certain objectives through Russia in the past,[55] such failure and wrongs can be corrected now. If China can turn out to be an all-weather friend, why not Russia?

Pakistan should seize the opportunities offered. One area of serious attention should be the resuscitation of the Dushanbe Four Initiative (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia and Tajikistan - PART). With the 'Look East Policy', Pakistan must not only satiate her national interests, but utilise it for diffusing the perception that Islamabad is regionally and globally isolated. Working with Russia as a member of SCO will invariably raise Pakistan's profile as a country strategically equipped to help resolve the protracted conflict in Afghanistan and facilitate the induction of Russia into the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).

Challenges to the 'Look East Policy'

Putin's eastward policy would not be altogether insulated from the following challenges:

1. Russia is not used to being an empire (although it acts like one), and thus, does not have the experience other European empires have had while either subjugating or relating with areas and regions other than Europe.

[55] Nazir Hussain, "Pak-Russia Relations: Lost Opportunities and Future Options," *Journal of Political Studies* Vol. 19, No.1 (2012), pp. 78-89.

2. Moscow needs to compete harder in order to convince Eastern countries of being a truly friendly country with the intent of healthy cooperation and development of the region.
3. Countries in the region need to be assured and reassured that Russia will not be making U-turns. Certain analysis consider the 'Look East Policy' as a product of pressure Russia is facing. Hence, when the pressure dies, would Moscow rescind its commitment to the region? Similarly, under external (third party) pressure, should Pakistan expect a new (unfriendly) face of Russia, as was the case with Moscow-Tehran relations, when a third party swayed Moscow against Tehran?
4. Maintaining deeper connection will have to mature over time. Even after demise of the Soviet Union, former communist countries have not entirely disengaged (in politics, diplomacy and economy) from Moscow. Therefore, its degree of influence still has weight amongst these nations. This might be uniquely different in the case of non-communist states.
5. As an integral part of the East, South Asia is an important region for Putin. Mentioning South Asia in various strategic documents not only signals this importance, it equally underlines the strategic niche of the region in Russia's overall global objectives. Regardless of the dividends its eastward policy presents, striking a balance between New Delhi and Islamabad will be as problematic for Moscow as it has been for Washington.
6. In as much as Moscow needs to come out with a clear-cut policy, easily and clearly understood by players in the region, the 'Look East Policy' will remain a vague policy –short-term in nature, with the potential to irritate the existing regional equation.

7. Given the level of US and Chinese influence in the region, Moscow will have to muster more strength and be pragmatic in order to convince countries that it can actually make a difference.

Conclusion

Remaining in the corridor of power and steering the foreign policy of Russia in a certain direction has greatly satiated Putin's strategic worldview. The dividends of such a foreign policy has overwhelmingly influenced Russia's domestic politics. On both fronts, Putin's political stamina has strengthened.

As a consequence of Moscow's foreign policy, its economy is grappling with sanctions from Western powers, and hence, the need for an alternative market. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that Russia decided to look eastward towards emerging economic power houses. Beyond economic and trade relations, looking eastward is a concerted attempt by Moscow to revive its traditional (ideological) relationship with the East. In addition to ideological fraternity that characterised the Cold War era, the region was a traditional recipient of Russian weapons and other forms of facilitations.

For India, Putin's eastward policy is promising and might deepen its existing multivector relations. Conversely, growing Pakistan-Russia ties prove that isolation intrigues by India have been less efficacious. Amidst all odds and determined efforts to regionally and internationally isolate the country, Islamabad has refused to be cowed, and has rather stood tall, resolute, and demonstrated its resilience to weather all forces bent at undermining its national integrity and interest. Both Pakistan-China and Pakistan-Russia relations are indicative of this reality.

Though, Putin's 'Look East Policy' for South Asia has been largely reduced to India and Pakistan, it is interesting to note, other countries in the region have equally been touched by its wave, especially Afghanistan.[56]

Argumentatively, India and Pakistan are two important tools in the hands of regional and international players. During the 1950s and 1960s, the US inducted Pakistan into its strategic realm. The strategic cooperation of the Cold War era helped Washington to consolidate its position against Soviet communism in the region. The same is true for Indo-US strategic partnership in the post-Cold War era - a partnership tailored at encircling China's influence and checkmating the long-standing Indo-Russia relations. It is not unlikely that the Indo-Russia pact is a strategic calculus meant to countercheck and counterbalance American and Chinese interests in South Asia, respectively. The recent Pak-Russia new beginning shares similar motives. One way or the other, India and Pakistan fit well into the strategic toolbox of regional and international powers.■

[56] Mahajan, "The Changing Nature of Russia's Engagement in South Asia."

Current Situation and Future of Economic Cooperation between China and South Asia

3

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Introduction

In recent years, China's cooperation with many countries, including those in South Asia on political, economic and international as well as regional issues has expanded. South Asia's status in China's 'neighbourhood' diplomacy continues to rise, becoming an indispensable part of its construction of a harmonious and stable neighbourhood.

South Asia covers about 5.2 million square kms which is 11.71 per cent of the Asian continent or 3.5 per cent of the world's land surface area. Its population is about 1.891 billion or about one fourth of the world's population, making it both the most populous and the most densely populated geographical regions in the world. Although the high Himalayas straddles between China and South Asia, both are very close neighbours. For example, there are eight countries in South Asia, and China directly borders five of them, including Bhutan, Nepal, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Three countries that China does not border are Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives; and yet, it

also maintains close political, economic and security cooperation with them as well.

This paper will not discuss all aspects of cooperation between China and South Asia. It will focus on their close economic cooperation, the most obvious of which is the Belt and Road cooperation. The Silk Road Economic Belt includes six corridors, and South Asia includes two, namely the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIMEC). Cooperation under the framework of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) includes Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Maldives. Therefore, South Asia has an important position in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Here are a few examples in this regard:

Pakistan: An All-Weather Strategic Partner and Time-Tested Friend of China

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Since the 1960s, China and Pakistan have maintained comprehensive political, economic and security cooperation. As Prime Minister Imran Khan said, China-Pakistan friendship is higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the Arabian Sea. However, for a long time, China-Pakistan cooperation concentrated more on politics, strategy and security, while economic cooperation was not fully explored. This completely changed with the initiation of CPEC. State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that CPEC is a major economic cooperation project carried out in response to Pakistan's needs.

Pakistan extended a helping hand to China when we faced difficulties. Therefore, China, a country valuing friendship and righteousness, is

now willing to return the favour to accelerate economic and social development here. There are currently 22 cooperation projects with a total investment of USD 19 billion dollars under the framework of CPEC, nine of which have been completed and 13 are under construction, driving up the annual economic growth of Pakistan by 1 to 2 percentage points, and creating 70,000 jobs. Early outcomes of CPEC have concentrated on energy and transportation infrastructure which is both an urgent requirement for Pakistan, and also a necessary stage for any country going through an industrialisation process.

Since it is impossible to develop manufacturing and smooth logistics without electricity and roads, these projects would help break through the bottlenecks of Pakistan's economic development and lay an important foundation for further development. The two sides have agreed that the development of CPEC will gradually stretch deeper into industrial cooperation and focus on helping Pakistan to develop manufacturing and foster independent development capabilities, thus, boosting employment and expanding trade.

Gwadar Free Zone

The Gwadar Free Zone kicks off industrial cooperation. Based on an agreement between the China Overseas Ports Holding Company (COPHC), Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) and Singapore Port Authority in 2013, the development and operation of this Zone was handed over to COPHC. Till now, COPHC has invested USD 250 million in port renovation. Five new quay cranes, a 100,000 M2 storage yard, a seawater desalination plant with capacity of 220,000-gallon pure water/day, two sets of sewage disposal systems and cargo handling equipment have been installed and 80,000 M2 green space

has been added to the port area. 400,000 tonnes of cargo was handled by Gwadar Port in 2017.

The Gwadar Free Zone is located in the northern part of Gwadar, about 7km away from the Port. The planned development period is from 2015 to 2030, and is divided into four phases. The 923-hectare Free Zone includes an initial area (25 hectares) and the northern area (898 hectares). The initial area is located in the west of the existing Port. Its main purpose is to play a pilot role in setting up industries, and to increase cargo capacity for the Port. The construction of the initial area includes a few projects: infrastructure, business centre, trade exhibition hall, cold storage, and warehouse. By January 2018, all of these were completed. The Gwadar Free Zone was inaugurated and the first International Expo was held in January 2018.

Around 30 companies have invested in the Free Zone, with direct investment of about USD 474 million. With the construction of the free zone, the city of Gwadar will become a commercial hub of the region in the near future. The project of Gwadar East Bay Expressway was agreed to by China and Pakistan during President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan in 2015. The EPC contract of the project was signed in September and construction was started in November 2017. The construction period of the project is 36 months with the designed speed of 100 kilometers per hour, implemented by the China Communications and Construction Company (CCCC). After inauguration, the project will become the main channel for cargo distribution of Gwadar Port and a vital communication line to connect the Free Zone in southern and northern areas of Gwadar.

Job Creation & Investment

Cooperation under the CPEC framework has already created thousands of job opportunities. According to preliminary statistics, CPEC projects have created more than 75,000 direct job opportunities for Pakistani people. In order to promote economic development and employment, Chinese companies also subcontract a large number of projects to local Pakistani companies. This also develops relevant upstream and downstream industries, such as raw material processing, catering industry which also provide more employment opportunities for local people. According to a report by Deloitte in 2017, CPEC will create 700,000 jobs for Pakistan from 2015 to 2030. A recent study by the CPEC Centre of Excellence, Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform of Pakistan showed that CPEC could help create 1.2 million jobs under its presently agreed project.

Sri Lanka: Important Partner under the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road Framework

China started commercial and economic cooperation with Sri Lanka in the early 1950s. For example, Sri Lanka signed a trade agreement that traded rubber for rice with China in 1952. It is noteworthy that the two countries did not have diplomatic relations then and China was subjected to economic sanctions by the US together with its allies at that time. With such a good beginning, one can understand why China and Sri Lanka continue to enjoy generally smooth and prosperous economic cooperation.

Trade

According to Customs authorities of Sri Lanka, the total overseas trade volume of Sri Lanka stood at USD 14.4 billion in the first half of 2016, which represents a 3 per cent reduction compared to the same period in 2015. The export trade volume is USD 5 billion which reduced by 4.8 per cent, while the import trade volume is USD 9.4 billion which increased by 1.4 per cent. Sri Lanka's main export commodities are knitted garments, non-knitted or non-crochet clothing, tea, rubber and related products. Other major export commodities include ships, aquatic products, mechanical and electrical products and fruit. Major import commodities include fossil fuels, machinery and equipment, transport equipment, mechanical and electrical products, knitted fabrics and crochet fabrics.

According to the Statistics Bureau of Sri Lanka, Sino-Sri Lanka bilateral trade in goods amounted to USD 2.05 billion in the first half of 2016 representing an increase by 3.5 per cent. Sri Lanka's imports from China amounted to USD 1.96 billion (an increase of 10.8 per cent, accounting for 20.9 per cent of Sri Lanka's total imports), while exports to China amounted to USD 90.26 million (a decrease by 56.5 per cent, accounting for 1.8 per cent of Sri Lanka's total exports). Sri Lanka's trade deficit with China was USD 1.87 billion. Sri Lanka's main exports to China include non-knitted goods, knitted or crochet clothing, coffee and tea, plant fiber and footwear products. Sri Lanka imports a wide range of goods that include mechanical and electrical products, machinery and equipment, knitted products, cotton, iron and steel products from China. Sri Lanka also imports chemical fiber products, fossil fuel, fertilizers, plastic products, furniture, fresh vegetables, footwear and optical instruments.

Now, China is the 11th export destination of Sri Lanka and is the largest source of imports. Among the top ten categories of imports, China's electrical and mechanical products, textiles, furniture, footwear and ceramic ware retain a dominant position. China's exports of transport equipment, chemicals, optical instruments and metal products are facing competition from India, Japan, Europe and the United States as well as other developed countries.

Sri Lanka is rich in natural resources and has obvious geographical advantages. However, the proportion of agriculture in the Sri Lankan GDP is relatively high, and the industrial base is comparatively weak. China has made great progress in industrialisation and has the ability to transfer some production capacity to Sri Lanka. Thus, China and Sri Lanka have great potential for further cooperation. Sri Lanka and China are now working towards signing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) which will greatly boost trade between the two countries. A joint feasibility study on the FTA stated that it would increase bilateral trade, particularly in certain product sectors of Sri Lankan interest, including but not limited to tea, rubber products, fish and fisheries products, textiles and clothing, coconut products, gems and jewelry, fruits and vegetables, machinery and electronics.

Investment and Project Contracting

According to the Commerce Department of the Government of China, the country's FDI in Sri Lanka amounted to USD 75.3 million in 2014 and the overall Chinese FDI amounted to USD 470 million by the end of 2014. Private enterprises of China invest in various sectors including hotel, tourism, agricultural products, fishing, furniture, textiles, storage and logistics. State-owned enterprises invest heavily in infrastructure, such as expressways, ports of Colombo and

Hambantota, thus, making significant contributions to social and economic development of Sri Lanka. For example, the value of project contracting by Chinese enterprises amounted to USD 2.8 billion in 2014 representing an increase by 32.4 per cent compared to the previous year. The overall value of project contracting by Chinese enterprises amounted to USD 13.96 billion at the end of 2014.

China's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road is perfectly connected to Sri Lanka's dream of re-emerging as the heart of the Indian Ocean. China has actively invested in infrastructure such as the Colombo Port as well as Hambantota Port. These projects will lay the foundations for Sri Lanka to become a shipping, logistics and financial centre in the Indian Ocean. In terms of investment, although Chinese companies investment in the port city of Colombo faced problems in 2015, it has been progressing more smoothly of late.

Sri Lanka's Minister of Urban Development Lanawak announced in early 2018 that: 'China Communications Construction Corporation will invest 1 billion US dollars to further participate in the development of the port city. Sri Lankan leaders thank the Chinese company for its construction efforts and promise legislation will be developed soon in the future to develop the port city into "the same financial center as Europe and Singapore."' The project will be completed in 20-25 years and early harvest will be seen in five years. In October, the international financial centre project of the Port City of Colombo was officially launched, and it is expected that the first phase will attract USD 4 billion investment. Other than that, the Hambantota Port project has also completed the transfer of management rights. Trade volume of China and Sri Lanka in 2017 increased to USD 4.6 billion, an increase of 3 per cent.

Other South Asian Countries and China: Prospects of Cooperation

In May 2017, then-Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Yu Hong and Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation under the BRI on behalf of the two governments. The Memorandum, which has a wide range of contents, will greatly deepen cooperation between China and Nepal in economic, environmental, scientific, technological and cultural aspects, promote interconnection, and enhance mutual understanding between the two peoples. Nepal hopes to strengthen its interconnection with China by participating in BRI, to improve its infrastructure, and achieve national prosperity. At present, the China-Nepal railway is being planned.

Economic cooperation between the Maldives, Bangladesh and China is also becoming stronger. The Indian side is in its own consideration and has concerns about the BRI up till now. However, the two countries can fully seek cooperation on the basis of common interests. They can adopt a case by case approach since it is not necessary to adopt a certain name or framework. Trade volume between China and India in 2018 was above USD 80 billion.

Afghanistan and China's Role for Peace

China is also actively involved in regional hotspot issues, especially in the process of reconciliation in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is an important neighbour of China and also the centre of Eurasia. Evolvement of the Afghan situation will definitely impact the entire region, including China. In the future, China can promote the Afghan reconciliation process in the following ways.

First of all, advocating that the Afghan peace process should be based on the principle of 'Afghan-led and Afghan-owned' and promoting comprehensive dialogue among different ethnic groups to seek consensus. At present, the Afghan war is deadlocked, the Taliban cannot recapture Kabul, while the US and Afghan government forces cannot eliminate the Taliban. Therefore, the peace process - the only way out - must be led by Afghans. The international community and neighbouring countries should focus on national interests and seek the greatest commonality for peace.

In December 2018, the 2nd Afghanistan-China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue was held in Kabul. The three sides reiterated their support to the 'Afghan-owned', and 'Afghan-led' inclusive peace process that is fully backed regionally and internationally, as the most viable way to bring peace in the country. In this regard, China and Pakistan appreciated the efforts of President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani for the comprehensive peace plans that came out of the second Kabul Process and the Geneva Conferences on Afghanistan, and therefore, called on the Afghan Taliban to join the peace process at an early date. While efforts are underway to start the peace process, the three sides call upon the parties concerned to end violence and the loss of innocent lives in Afghanistan.

Second, China should give full play to its unique political advantage since it is not hostile to any ethnic group and has never supported any group or force against others. It can provide sufficient security for all parties and provide a platform to them for direct contact and in-depth discussions.

Third, China will continue to provide necessary assistance. For example, in 2016, the Chinese government provided assistance of RMB

500 million to the Afghan government to explore the implementation of mutually agreed projects. In 2017, President Xi Jinping announced the provision of emergency food aid to developing countries such as Afghanistan during the International Cooperation Summit of Belt & Road Initiative. The Chinese side also actively supports the Afghan side to strengthen capacity building and provide training for professionals in various fields in accordance with the needs of the country. In June 2018, Afghan President Ghani visited China during the Qingdao Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). He expressed his admiration for China's economic and social development achievements; as well as gratitude for the country's long-term assistance to Afghanistan and valuable support for the peace reconciliation process.

Trilateral Cooperation between China, Pakistan and Afghanistan

From the perspective of trilateral cooperation between Afghanistan, China and Pakistan, the three sides have agreed to continue economic development cooperation in areas of mutual interest. They will continue to implement and expand 'soft' projects such as exchange and capacity building programmes and explore 'hard' projects of livelihood facilities and connectivity. China expressed its readiness to support Afghanistan and Pakistan in building an immigration reception centre and drinking water supply schemes at each side of the Ghulam Khan Khel crossing point, and to explore cold storages at Chaman and Spin Boldak. China supports enhanced coordination between Afghanistan and Pakistan on major energy and connectivity projects including the construction of Quetta-Kandahar railway and Kabul-Peshawar Motorway and Railway.

Conclusion

In short, China used to be, at present is and in the future will still be, a close neighbour of South Asian countries and has extensive and profound national interests in the region. The Chinese government will continue to cooperate with all its partners in all fields, including economic cooperation.■

US' South Asia Policy under Trump Administration: Future of Regional Stability

- **Trump's South Asia Policy: Looking Back and Looking Ahead**
  Dr Joshua T. White

- **Emerging Trends in the Security Architecture of South Asia: Role of Pakistan**
  Dr M. Sheharyar Khan

Trump's South Asia Policy: Looking Back and Looking Ahead

4

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Introduction

On 21 August 2017, President Trump announced his administration's 'South Asia Strategy'. On its face, it appeared to represent a significant shift from the regional policies pursued by President Obama over the previous eight years. Although it was vague in some respects, President Trump's 'South Asia Strategy' articulated several clear and coherent themes. First, it purported to shift the United States (US)' policy on Afghanistan from a time-based commitment to a conditions-based commitment in which US commanders would be given expanded operational authorities and a mandate to 'fight to win' the conflict.[1] Second, it put forward a more overtly critical line regarding Pakistan, arguing that '[we] can no longer be silent about Pakistan's safe havens for terrorist organizations, the Taliban, and other groups that pose a threat to the region and beyond.'[2] This language prefigured a policy of increasing pressure on — and suspending funding to — Pakistan

[1] Donald J. Trump, "Remarks by President Trump on the Strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia," The White House, 27 August 2017, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-strategy-afghanistan-south-asia/.

[2] Ibid.

to take specific actions against the Taliban and associated groups. And third, the new approach looked forward to strengthening India's role in Afghanistan consistent with the administration's conception of a wider 'Indo-Pacific' policy that stretched from the west coast of the US to the west coast of India.[3]

In the year that followed, the Trump administration followed through on this Strategy in several respects. It narrowed US diplomatic engagement with Pakistan, taking a more critical public line and pointedly declining to engage a wide spectrum of political and economic issues in bilateral fora until its security concerns were addressed. It suspended virtually all security assistance to Pakistan. And it lobbied other countries to add Pakistan to the so-called grey list at the Financial Action Task Force meeting in February 2018, criticising as inadequate its steps to curtail money laundering and terrorist financing.[4]

This paper addresses two deceptively simple questions related to the 'South Asia Strategy': Where did it come from? And to what extent might it produce durable changes in US policy toward the region? It highlights, first, that while it may be tempting to see President Trump's strategy as principally the outgrowth of his particular impulses, personality traits, and predilections, such a view risks obscuring the fact that the Strategy was in many ways a natural extension of several underlying trends in US thinking about South

3 Rex Tillerson, "Defining Our Relationship with India for the Next Century," Center for Strategic and International Studies, 18 October 2017, https://www.csis.org/analysis/defining-our-relationship-india-next-century-address-us-secretary-state-rex-tillerson.

4 Pakistan was eventually added to the grey list. See, e.g., "Pakistan Placed on FATF 'Grey List' despite Diplomatic Efforts to Avert Decision," *Dawn,* 28 June 2018, https://www.dawn.com/news/1416630.

Asia, many of which pre-date Trump's presidency. Second, the paper argues that although several of the key thrusts of the strategy have been overcome by events, some of its foundational elements reflect deeper trends that are likely to be sustained over the longer term horizon.

Origins of the South Asia Strategy

Much of the early analysis of the Trump administration's 'South Asia Strategy' described its origins in highly personalistic terms. President Trump was explicit about his disdain for President Obama's management of the war in Afghanistan, and had articulated on the campaign trail a series of criticisms about the ways in which Obama had accommodated and financially supported Pakistan rather than confronting it for its regional policies that ran counter to US interests. The criticism of Obama's Afghanistan strategy was part of then-candidate Trump's broader criticism of open-ended American security commitments in which the US military was, ostensibly, constrained by unnecessary political micromanagement. Observers also noted that some of the President's early hires had previously taken a tough public line on Pakistan, and had argued that the US had never truly attempted to use coercive pressure to incentivise Pakistan to take steps to rein in militant groups such as the Haqqani Taliban network.[5]

[5] Most notably, Lisa Curtis of the Hudson Institute co-authored a report in February 2017 that advocated a more assertive approach with respect to Pakistan. She was later appointed as Deputy Assistant to the President at the National Security Council staff, coordinating US policy toward South and Central Asia. Lisa Curtis and Husain Haqqani, "A New U.S. Approach to Pakistan: Enforcing Aid Conditions without Cutting Ties," Hudson Institute, 6 February 2017, https://www.hudson.org/research/13305-a-new-u-s-approach-to-pakistan-enforcing-aid-conditions-without-cutting-ties.

There is no question that the President's own impulses and intuitions were key determinants of the strategy that emerged in August 2017. However, this study outlines that the policy framework that he presented was, in key respects, a product of changing assumptions within the South Asia expert community in the US, and that those assumptions had been evolving even before Trump was elected President.

Pakistan's Fragility

The first notable shift in expert opinion that prefigured some of the Trump administration's strategy had to do with changing assumptions about the Pakistani state itself. American observers had, even before Trump, come to believe that perhaps Pakistan was not as 'fragile' a state as they had once imagined.

The notion that Pakistan was a fragile state did not emerge merely as a result of sensational media reporting about the subcontinent. It had deeper roots: Americans were all too familiar with Pakistan's long history of coups and military-judicial disruptions of elected governments. The systemic weakness of civilian governments relative to the military, and the periodic disruptions of the electoral system, suggested that Pakistan's democracy was fragile, and that weak democratic institutions could jeopardise the broader political order as well.

Moreover, it was obvious that Pakistan had long been in conflict with its neighbours; had a history of political fragmentation, having lost half its country in 1971; and had been governed (directly or otherwise) by a security establishment that had systematically underinvested in the kind of welfare spending that might bolster social resilience over the long term. Compounding these challenges

was a demographic reality: Pakistan is very young, and while such a profile might present opportunities for a country with a dynamic economy, its history of mediocre economic management suggested that a so-called youth bulge could contribute instead to social and political fragility over the coming decades.

Perhaps the most consequential factor shaping outside views of Pakistan's fragility was the longstanding presence of Islamic extremist groups operating within the country. American experts usually take care to disaggregate this into two separate but related challenges: the state's propensity, since independence in 1947, to retain and instrumentalise radical Islamic groups as a tool to achieve foreign policy objectives vis-a-vis India and Afghanistan; and the state's vulnerability, since the 1990s, to a new breed of Islamists that have targeted Pakistani institutions and civilians in an attempt to overthrow the state itself.

The dramatic rise of the anti-state Taliban in the northern district of Swat in 2008 and 2009 — and the prospect that the militants would make a bid for wider territorial control — crystalised for many Americans the view that Islamic militancy might eventually overwhelm the state, and lead to some kind of broader political or social disintegration. The fact that Pakistan had nuclear weapons only heightened American anxieties.

This rather bleak assessment, however, began to be re-examined following Pakistan's vigorous and largely successful military campaign to root out anti-state militants. By 2015, terrorism within Pakistan had begun to decrease dramatically, and while few American experts were convinced that the military had appreciably severed its ties to externally-focused militant groups, there was no

longer as much concern about the fragility of the Pakistani state itself.[6]

Furthermore, the sweeping 2010 constitutional reforms devolving power from the central government had, over time, appeared to dampen some of the country's more pronounced internal ethnic and provincial tensions. In short, an alternative view emerged which saw Pakistan as a relatively stable state, even if it remained an unstable polity.

What was good news for Pakistan had a second-order effect on US-Pakistan relations: as anxiety about its fragility waned, the US became more convinced that the government did not require substantial financial subventions in order to stave off social or political disorder; and, in turn, it became less convinced that a strategy of isolating and pressuring Pakistan to act against externally-focused militant groups would meaningfully destabilise the state.

The Transactional 'Balance'

The second significant shift in expert opinion that began prior to the start of the Trump administration had to do with the US' net assessment of the *value* of its relationship with Pakistan. Simply put, during the latter years of the Obama administration, the US found itself grappling with a long-simmering structural problem in the

[6] See, e.g., data reported by the Pakistan National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and the South Asia Terrorism Portal. "Terrorism Decline in Pakistan," NACTA, https://nacta.gov.pk/terrorism-decline-in-pakistan/ [Accessed 1 February 2018]; "Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2000-2019," South Asia Terrorism Portal, http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm [Accessed 1 February 2018].

relationship: it was expending significant funds in the form of security and economic assistance to Pakistan, and was incurring some reputational cost for its close ties with a state that was widely seen as flouting international norms related to terrorism. At the same time, the US government recognised that it was no longer as dependent upon Pakistan as it once was for mitigating the risk of transnational terrorist groups to its territory.

Pakistan's counterterrorism initiatives, beginning with those undertaken by General Pervez Musharraf in the early days after 11 September 2001, and continuing through the tenures of subsequent civilian governments, had the effect of helping to severely degrade the threat that al-Qaeda posed to the US and its partners. These operations were costly to Pakistan in financial and human terms, and the significant US security and economic assistance was seen as a way of compensating the former for this important area of partnership.

In the decade following Musharraf's resignation, many American observers continued to believe that the financial aspects of the partnership were reasonable and appropriate. But, that became a harder case to make in Washington. American observers noted that Pakistan seemed consistently to target its counterterrorism activities in such a way as to avoid disenfranchising 'useful' militant groups operating in Afghanistan and India.[7] They began to question more regularly and openly whether the levels of US funding to Pakistan

[7] For example, this view was captured in the early days of the major 2014 operations. Saeed Shah, Safdar Dawar, and Adam Entous, "Militants Slip Away before Pakistan Offensive," *Wall Street Journal,* 17 July 2014, https://www.wsj.com/articles/militants-slip-away-before-pakistan-offensive-1405637710.

were still commensurate with the value that it provided to supporting American counterterrorism interests.

This shift in assumptions took place slowly. By later years of the Obama administration, some US officials came to believe that the level of financial assistance to Pakistan was not politically sustainable at home, and they gradually allowed that assistance to decrease in an effort to reduce the role that assistance played as an irritant in the bilateral relationship.

President Trump's decision to suspend all security assistance to Pakistan represented a significant and unexpected acceleration of this trend. It is notable that changes in the counterterrorism environment in South Asia had gradually altered the perception in Washington about the relative value of a financially costly relationship with Pakistan, and had laid the groundwork for President Trump to be able to suspend assistance without garnering significant objection within the bureaucracy, the Congress, or the foreign policy elite.

The Wider Asian Context

There was a third way in which President Trump's 'South Asia Strategy' reflected — and built upon — changing perceptions within the Washington foreign policy community. In his August 2017 speech, the President pointedly called on India to deepen its engagement in Afghanistan:

> Another critical part of the South Asia strategy for America is to further develop its strategic partnership with India — the world's largest democracy and a key security and economic partner of the United States. We

> appreciate India's important contributions to stability in Afghanistan, but India makes billions of dollars in trade with the United States, and we want them to help us more with Afghanistan, especially in the area of economic assistance and development.[8]

Not surprisingly, this comment was not particularly well received in Islamabad. But neither did it seem to be welcome in New Delhi, where some Indian elites took offense at the President's chiding tone and worried about the escalation of proxy competition for influence in Afghanistan — a competition that India would be unlikely to win.[9]

President Trump's description of America's desired role for India in Afghanistan may have been impolitic and narrowly counterproductive, but his words reflected a growing body of opinion in the US that seeks to encourage India's emergence as a 'net security provider' in South Asia and beyond. The administration's 'Indo-Pacific' strategy was new in the sense that it articulated for the first time a pan-Asian approach to policy formation and sought to respond to the breadth and ambition of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) across the Eurasian continent. However, the desire to leverage India's attention and resources across Asia — including in Afghanistan — had deeper roots. The

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8 Donald J. Trump, 27 August 2017.

9 See, e.g., Annie Gowen, "India already Gives Afghanistan Billions in Aid. Now Trump says India must 'Help Us More,'" *Washington Post,* 22 August 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/08/22/india-already-gives-afghanistan-billions-in-aid-now-trump-says-india-must-help-us-more/; Rajrishi Singhal, "Interpreting Trump's Not-so-Subtle Threat to India to Do More in Afghanistan," *Quartz India*, 27 August 2017, https://qz.com/india/1063325/interpreting-donald-trumps-not-so-subtle-threat-to-india-to-do-more-in-afghanistan/.

Obama administration's designation of India as a Major Defense Partner, and its investment in the country as a long-term strategic partner is an implicit acceptance of its role as a regional leader, and itself built on a bipartisan consensus forged during the George W. Bush administration.

The South Asia Strategy and the Long Horizon

The preceding discussion suggests that the 'South Asia Strategy' put forward by President Trump in the summer of 2017 may have been distinctive and disruptive, but it did not represent a decisive rupture from past US policy towards the region. It was, instead, a strategy that can be seen in the context of a changing regional environment, and set of evolving assessments by the foreign policy elite in Washington.

Looking forward, how should one assess the long-term viability of the Trump administration's strategic approach to the region? In certain respects, there are reasons for skepticism that the 'South Asia Strategy' will endure as a cohesive policy approach. Indeed, some dimensions of the Strategy already appear to have been set aside.

In the first place, we can observe that the pledge to pursue a 'conditions-based' commitment to sustained US presence in Afghanistan has already been effectively obviated by the President's own decision to telegraph his desire to withdraw US forces from the country. Although the US government messaging on this count has been muddled, it is sufficiently clear that Afghans have less reason today to repose confidence in the longevity of American presence than they did prior to the election of Donald Trump in November 2016.

The future of the Afghanistan peace process remains very much uncertain. At the moment, the US and Pakistan find themselves in tactical alignment, sharing the view that direct engagement between the US and the Taliban is the most effective path forward towards a negotiated settlement, even if it results in some alienation of the Afghan government in the near term. Effectively, this alignment is a product of the fact that the US is now doing what Pakistan has long urged it to do: negotiate directly with the Taliban leadership.

The stark reality for the US is that it is seeking a means to partially or completely extricate itself from its expensive involvement in a lengthy war, but is doing so from a position of relative weakness. Public reporting by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) reveals that Taliban control within Afghanistan has not diminished over time; it has, instead, gradually increased. Estimates, released in January 2019, suggest that only 53.8 per cent of districts are under government control or influence, and that 63.5 per cent of the population lives in those districts.[10] In addition, the Taliban control important lines of communication within the country, and have become deeply embedded in the social fabric. It stands to reason that any peace deal amongst the three key parties — the Taliban, the Afghan government, and the US — is likely to be one in which *all* parties, and not just the Taliban, are required to make meaningful concessions.

In the context of President Trump's apparent eagerness to drawdown US forces and scale down its commitments to Afghanistan, the 'South Asia Strategy's focus on applying pressure on

[10] SIGAR, "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, 30 January 2019, pp. 68-72, https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2019-01-30qr.pdf.

Pakistan to alter its actions vis-a-vis Afghanistan seems increasingly dissonant and unlikely to be sustained. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that any resolution to the Afghan conflict that is acceptable to the US, short of sustaining a large number of troops for an indefinite horizon, will require some measure of American cooperation with Pakistan and concession to its interests. Such imperatives would seem to render untenable a strategy predicated on isolation and pressure.

Although many of the fundamental American complaints about Pakistan that drove the formation of the so-called pressure strategy remain unresolved — most notably, the state's unwillingness to deal with the permissive environment for externally focused militant groups — the Trump administration's own choices and regional priorities appear now to foreshadow a more accommodating policy towards the country. By prioritising a drawdown of US presence in Afghanistan and, not incidentally, pursuing a more confrontational path with key regional stakeholders such as China, Russia, and Iran, Washington has left itself with little choice but to lean more heavily on Islamabad as a partner to secure its own security interests in Afghanistan.

This may seem like welcome news to Islamabad. But Pakistani policymakers' optimism should be tempered by the fact that the nascent US-Pakistan rapprochement is narrow and fragile, and the overall policy alignment between the two countries is likely to remain limited for some time. As described earlier in this paper, the degradation of the bilateral relationship under President Trump was only partially due to his own particular style and policy orientation; it can be seen in part as a continuation of wider trends related to the changing counterterrorism environment and underlying frustrations

by American policymakers regarding the value of their partnership with Pakistan. It is also a product of uncertainty regarding the potential for US-Pakistan congruence on Afghanistan: after many years of sustained dialogue, most American officials and experts are simply not confident that they understand what it is that Pakistan actually wants in Afghanistan; what political and security environment there would be sufficient to prompt it to rein in its own hedging strategy; and whether Pakistani elites in fact themselves know the answers to these questions.

This analysis suggests that, while the potential to increase cooperation on an Afghanistan peace process presents an opportunity for bolstering bilateral US-Pakistan ties, one cannot yet be confident that this alignment can be sustained over the long-term, nor should anyone expect that the relationship will simply return to the *status quo ante* after Trump eventually leaves office.

Nor should anyone expect that the basic geopolitical orientation of the US in the region will change in the near term. Seen through the wider frame of managing its competition with a rising China, the US has a compelling rationale for investing in India as a long-term partner and bolstering its capacity to play a more substantial role across the Indo-Pacific. This does not necessarily imply that US policymakers will build on President Trump's comments to press New Delhi to increase its funding, political engagement, or even its modest security support to Afghanistan. But, it does mean that the US is likely to continue to pursue soft alignment with India, and take seriously its as-yet-unresolved concerns about Pakistan's ongoing relationships with internationally sanctioned organisations that target its neighbours.

The 'South Asia Strategy' may or may not live on as an official policy 'brand', but it is evident that its tenets are already evolving to adapt to changing realities in the region.[11] US officials have indicated that they see progress towards a peace settlement in Afghanistan as the key to unlocking a broader relationship with Pakistan.[12] But even that opportunity risks being fleeting if regional stakeholders perceive that geopolitical realignments might lead to a more starkly polarised Asia, one in which it seems as though the US and India are on one side, and Pakistan, China, Russia, and Iran are on the other. Such a polarisation would work at cross-purposes for durable peace in Afghanistan, and both Washington and Islamabad have an interest at this important juncture in demonstrating that regional polarisation is neither desirable nor inevitable.■

[11] Some regional analysts have already foretold the end of the strategy. See, e.g., Suhasini Haidar, "After the Inevitable Exit," *The Hindu,* 5 January 2019, https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/after-the-inevitable-exit/article25914291.ece.

[12] Anwar Iqbal "US Spells out Terms of Engagement with Pakistan," *Dawn,* 3 September 2018, https://www.dawn.com/news/1430630.

Emerging Trends in the Security Architecture of South Asia: Role of Pakistan

5

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Abstract

The security architecture of South Asia is undergoing some visible trends. The region is home to ongoing rivalry between two nuclear states: Pakistan and India. The rivalry has also shifted to the western border of Pakistan in Afghanistan where the United States is trying for peaceful exit in wake of a resurgent Taliban. China is helping Pakistan by investing billions of dollars through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Russia and Iran have made contact with the Taliban, while Pakistan has initiated active diplomacy to find a regional solution to the Afghan problem. Pakistan and Sri Lanka both have defeated terrorism inside their territories, but there is spillover of ethnic and religious groups across boundaries. Given these trends, the paper seeks to analyse the South Asia's security architecture and determine Pakistan's role in the unfolding situation.

Introduction

South Asia has geopolitical and geostrategic importance. Two countries of the region, Pakistan and India, are not only nuclear powers, but also have a history of conflict and tension. Both have experienced several wars and often blame each other for supporting terrorist activities within each other's borders. Afghanistan has seen violence for the last 40 years, and there is now hope of a negotiated settlement in the backdrop of US-Taliban talks. Pakistan has defeated its home-grown terrorism as has Sri Lanka. There are border tensions between India and China while both are also intensifying their rivalry in the Indian Ocean. There is a need to re-visit the security architecture of the region in order to find new trends and Pakistan's role in shaping it.

The paper adopts the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) of Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver. Buzan also discussed South Asia in an article[1] ten years after his book *People, State and Fear*. Buzan defined security complex as a group of states whose primary security concerns result from a process of securitisation, de-securitisation, or both are so interlinked that their security problems cannot be reasonably analysed or resolved apart from one another. He had two main observations:

1. The South Asian RSC was slowly moving towards an internal transformation from bipolarity to unipolarity as India became more powerful and Pakistan stagnated.

1 Barry Buzan, "The South Asian Security Complex in a Decentring World Order: Reconsidering Regions and Powers Ten Years On," *International Studies* Vol. 48, No. 1 (January 2011), pp. 1–19, https://doi.org/10.1177/002088171204800101.

2. The rise of China was creating a centre of gravity that was slowly drawing South Asia into closer security interaction with the East Asian RSC.

It was suggested that the change in the South Asian Complex was incremental and slow, rather than sudden and dramatic. To see the change and look for trends in the security architecture of South Asia, Buzan identified the following factors: [2]

- Maintenance of *status quo*
- Internal and external transformation
- Overlay.

Status quo means that there is no significant change in power capabilities between the states. The internal transformation means structural change due to regional political integration; shifts in distribution of power; and major shift in amity and enmity. External transformation occurs in the external boundary by either contraction or expansion. Overlay means one or more powers move into the complex directly.[3]

Given this theoretical framework, the main argument of this paper is that there has been a significant development in the overlay of South Asia with East Asian Complex as India has looked east to hedge China, while the latter has made significant ingress into South Asia by supporting India's adversaries. The balance of power has greatly shifted towards India yet Pakistan is trying to balance the former by aligning with China. The US role as a superpower is diminishing in the region and great power politics is taking over.

[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

Trends at the Domestic Level

On the political front, there are some significant changes which have given rise to tensions with neighbouring countries. India elected the Hindu extremist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) into power which derives its strength through populism. The rise of BJP and its divisive policies is creating internal tension within India, thus, weakening the national fabric and polity. BJP politics is driving a wedge between the Hindu majority and Muslim minority.[4] Playing on identity politics, the vision of BJP is to redesign secular India as 'Hindu India.'

It has also shown a strong muscular policy and use of force against Kashmiris even if they peacefully protest for their rights. India is also keeping the Line of Control (LoC) and Working Boundary with Pakistan hot by continuous ceasefire violations which both blame on each other.[5] Although, overall militant attacks in Kashmir have reduced, yet the incidents are enough to affect Pak-India relations. India also claims to have committed a surgical strike within Azad Kashmir, the first of its kind, a claim which Pakistan vehemently rejects.[6]

There are also some significant developments with regard to non-state violent actors at the domestic level. Pakistan saw the rise and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and subsequently defeated it. TTP

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4 "Bharatiya Janata Party," http://www.bjp.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=369:hindutva-the-great-nationalist-ideology&Itemid=501 [Accessed 27 December 2018].

5 Naveed Siddiqui, "Pakistan Summons Indian Envoy to Protest Killing of Civilian in LoC Ceasefire Violation," *Dawn*, https://www.dawn.com/news/1456056 [Accessed 27 January 2019].

6 "Surgical Strikes: Pakistan Rejects India's Claims," *Al Jazeera*, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/09/pakistan-denies-india-carried-surgical-strikes-160929165646369.html [Accessed 27 January 2019].

used religion for violence and the phenomenon was closely linked with the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Pakistan's decision to join the US-led War on Terror in Afghanistan, let loose militants in the country. After losing over 50,000 people,[7] Pakistan ultimately defeated the Taliban.

The last decades also saw the creation and surge of insurgency in Balochistan. Different ethnic terrorist groups started attacking Pakistan. Although, the terror activities of such groups, are still ongoing, Pakistan has been able to contain them. However, the ethnic politics of Balochistan province is still relevant. Pakistan blames Afghanistan and India for fomenting insurgency in the province which these countries deny.[8]

In Sri Lanka, the government was able to defeat the decades' long violent civil war launched by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Nevertheless, the grievances of minority Tamil against the Sinhalese-dominated government still continues.

In Afghanistan, continuous resurgence of the Taliban undermines the security of the state and has invited other actors like Russia and Iran into play. The Taliban now have control over more than 50 per cent of the country, and have increased their attacks on Kabul and

7 "Pakistan Lost over 50,000 Civilians in War on Terror," *The Express Tribune*, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1599831/1-pakistan-lost-50000-civilians-war-terror/ [Accessed 2 January 2019].

8 M Ilyas Khan, "What Lies behind Pakistani Charges of Indian 'Terrorism,'" *BBC News*, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-32604137 [Accessed 27 January 2019].

other city centres.[9] The US is now directly engaged with the Taliban in talks and there are efforts initiated by Pakistan, Russia, Iran, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia to find a political solution to the Afghan problem.

Regional Level Trends

Regional level trends are undergoing changes. India and Pakistan remain in traditional rivalry, but the relations between the two have soured further. India is showing greater belligerence at the LoC in Kashmir and there are continuous ceasefire violations. India refuses to talk to Pakistan and there is no visible chance of them starting a dialogue for peace. The BJP has adopted strong rhetoric against Pakistan and has so far rebuffed any efforts of talks offered by the latter. India is also rapidly acquiring new weapon systems and modernising its armed forces. Pakistan believes India has encircled the country by supporting TTP and Baloch insurgents via Afghanistan. India also blames Pakistan for terror incidents within its territory.

The power gap between Pakistan and India is increasing. Although both are nuclear weapon states, yet the economic growth of India has allowed it to invest in defense. Pakistan, unfortunately, has suffered economically due to political instability and terrorism. There is also dispute over the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) since Pakistan accuses India of stealing its share from the Indus River.

There is always fear of nuclear war between the two countries if they do not resolve the core issue of Kashmir. In response to India's Cold

9 Kara Fox, "Taliban Control of Afghanistan on the Rise, US Inspector Says," *CNN.com*, https://edition.cnn.com/2018/11/01/middleeast/afghanistan-report-taliban-gains-control-intl/index.html [Accessed 27 January 2019].

Start Doctrine (CSD), Pakistan has developed Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) which is indicative of how serious the issue is.

Trends at the Inter-Regional Level

The interplay of South Asian region with East Asia, Eurasia and Asian super complex through China is seeing deeper interaction. This interaction also affects the global level. As for Afghanistan, it is still keeping the Eurasian Security Complex at bay from South Asia, yet Russia is taking keen interest in the region, especially given Daesh (ISIS in Khorasan) presence and activities; and the presence of US bases in its new assertive foreign policy. Russia has established contacts with the Taliban,[10] and held a meeting in November 2018 known as the Moscow Format.[11] However, it does not seem to be a defining actor in South Asia, although it has warmed its relations with Pakistan and vice versa.

In Southeast Asia, India has also cultivated good relations with East Asian countries. It has moved from its 'Look East Policy' to 'Act East Policy'. The Indian navy is a regular visitor of Southeast Asian waters and conducts joint exercises with its friends there, who quietly welcome this engagement seeing it as help to balance Chinese presence.

[10] Missy Ryan and Amie Ferris-Rotman, "Kremlin's Return to Afghanistan: 30 Years after the Soviet Withdrawal, Moscow Wants Back In," *The Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/world/wp/2018/10/12/feature/behind-the-scenes-russia-regains-a-complicated-status-afghanistan-power-broker/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.bea63c641739 [Accessed 27 January 2019].

[11] "On the Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan," *The Nation*, https://nation.com.pk/16-Nov-2018/on-the-moscow-format-consultations-on-afghanistan [Accessed 27 January 2017].

India is keen to access Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) technologies, modernising its air force and navy apparently to counter China's increasing outreach, but at the same time, to undermine Pakistan's security.

South Asia at the Global Level

The world is undergoing deep changes towards de-centralised globalism based on great and regional powers, with no single or multiple superpowers. At the global level, China may try to replace the US, especially in its neighbourhood, while remaining a regional power. The US may lose its footprint in the region as it is fast losing grip on the unfolding security situation there. India, with the help of the US, would like to hedge China.

China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) boasts of its key component the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is a multibillion dollar investment in Pakistan's infrastructure, energy and agriculture sectors. The project connects Pakistan not only with China, but also the other countries of the region. CPEC has provided China a huge footprint in the South Asian region; and also offers Pakistan an opportunity to balance India's growing power. It remains to be seen how BRI pans out and how the US reacts to it in the long term. The recent trade war between China and the US is likely to affect Chinese ambitions.

Pakistan's Role and Options

At the regional level, Pakistan's role in balancing India on its own has diminished considerably due to constant political instability, economic decay and terrorism. Its relations with the US have also been witnessing a downward spiral. Pakistan's nuclear capability is

still a counterweight to India, yet other South Asian states have not come to band with Islamabad to counter New Delhi.

Pakistan can hedge this security imbalance by involving China to counterweight India. It is also trying to bring peace in Afghanistan to secure its Western border and hedge India's ingress there.

Islamabad has adopted multilateral diplomatic solutions to Afghanistan and has tried to bring in China and facilitated Russia to play a part in the Afghan solution. Pakistan's priority should be to reduce enmity with the Afghan government and continuously work on amity with China and Iran. Pakistan's influence on the Taliban and the US' desire for peaceful exit from Afghanistan has placed it again at the forefront of the Afghan problem. Pakistan can reap maximum benefits from the new arrangement in Afghanistan provided it plays its cards well.

Pakistan's domestic transformation, by becoming a more political and economically stable country with few issues with neighbours, will bring in great benefits. The country needs a paradigm shift in transforming itself to bring its people out of poverty and mass illiteracy. In order to have influence over its surroundings, it would need to be less dependent on great powers. For the moment, China's interest in the region is a godsend.

Conclusion

In the foreseeable future, the South Asian security architecture may see the power distribution widening further. The US is likely to withdraw from the region which may invite China as guarantor much to the chagrin of India. India's 'Act East Policy' will prompt

China's involvement in South Asia. This would be an opportunity for Pakistan to balance power with China's engagement since India seems less engaged at the regional level. To become a major power, it has to resolve its disputes with its neighbours and be accepted by them as a legitimate power. This is not the case so far.■

South Asian Dynamics: Interests of Major Powers

- **Testing Rationality in Foreign Policy: Donald Trump and the US-Pakistan Relationship**
  Harrison Akins

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  Dr Liu Zongyi

- **Russia's Interests in South Asia: From Old Geopolitical to New Strategic Alignments**
  Leonid Savin

Testing Rationality in Foreign Policy: Donald Trump and the US-Pakistan Relationship

6

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In January 2018, US President Donald Trump, taking to his communication outlet of choice, tweeted:

> The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe havens to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more![1]

The Trump administration followed this accusation with an announcement that it was suspending as much as USD 1 billion in aid to Pakistan and pushed for the country to be placed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) watch list.[2] For an American public bombarded by a never-ending news cycle, Trump's bombastic comments and policy shift helped to put a spotlight on America's relationship with its key South Asian ally. More importantly, this shift in policy towards Pakistan, which has been strengthening its

[1] Donald Trump, @realDonaldTrump Twitter, 1 January 2018, https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/ status/947802588174577664.

[2] Harrison Akins, "Pakistan Getting Tough Love from US and China," *East Asia Forum*, 9 March 2018.

relationship with China, came at time when the US government was increasing its troop presence in Afghanistan and continuing to expand its military mission in the country.[3] These operations could be undermined without the support of Pakistan and the vital supply routes through its territory.

There has long been an assumption within the academic literature on foreign policy that political leaders' behaviour is grounded in rationality. This was a hallmark of realist scholarship for decades, arguing that statesmen are rational actors seeking to maximise state power.[4] There are a number of factors that insulate foreign policy decisions and day-to-day diplomacy from the vicissitudes of electoral politics and changes in presidential administrations, such as the professionalisation of the Foreign Service and other bureaucratic structures and the continuity of a state's long-term strategic interests. Scholars, however, have also recognised the influence that domestic politics can play in the foreign policy decision-making process, especially in democracies where leaders face domestic audience costs through elections.[5] Political scientists Helen Milner

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3 Mujib Mashal, "U.S. Troop Increase in Afghanistan Is Underway, General Says," *New York Times*, 24 August 2017.

4 John J Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001); Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6th Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985); Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1979).

5 Todd L. Allee and Paul K. Huth, "Legitimizing Dispute Settlement: International Legal Rulings as Domestic Political Cover," *American Political Science Review* Vol. 100, No.2 (2006), pp. 219-234; Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Randolph M. Siverson, "War and the Survival of Political Leaders: A Comparative Study of Regime Types and Political Accountability," *American Political Science Review* Vol. 89, No. 4 (1995), pp. 841-855; James D. Fearon, "Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Theories of International Relations," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998), pp. 289-313; Helen V. Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Dan Reiter and Allan C. Stam, "Democracy, War Initiation, and

further identifies three domestic factors influencing a state's foreign policy decisions:

1. construction of preferences and national interests;
2. informs which strategies states will use;
3. domestic actors must ratify or agree to cooperating agreements. [6]

Yet, in all of these theories, leaders are understood to be inherently rational actors who seek to promote their states' interests abroad.

For a number of pundits and political scientists alike, the rhetoric, policy, and behaviour of Donald Trump and his administration have challenged many of theoretical assumptions within Political Science and our understanding of political behaviour.[7] In an article for *Foreign Policy*, political scientist Stephen Walt stated unambiguously, 'America's new president is not a rational actor,' with many of his decisions undermining his administration's own stated foreign policy interests.[8] This claim of irrationality is relevant with regard to the Trump administration's relationship with

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Victory," *American Political Science Review* Vol. 92, No. 2 (1998), pp. 377-389; and, Jessica L. Weeks, "Autocratic Audience Costs: Regime Type and Signaling Resolve," *International Organization* Vol. 62 (2008), pp. 35-64.

6 Helen Milner, "Review: International Theories of Cooperation among Nations: Strengths and Weaknesses," *World Politics* Vol. 44, No. 3 (1992), pp. 466-496.

7 Todd Donovan and Shaun Bowler, "Donald Trump's Challenge to the Study of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties," *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* Vol. 28, No.2 (2018), pp. 125-134; and, Robert Jervis, Francis J. Gavin, Joshua Rovner, and Diane N. Labrosse, eds. *Chaos in the Liberal Order: The Trump Presidency and International Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018).

8 Stephen M. Walt, "America's New President Is Not a Rational Actor," *Foreign Policy*, 25 January 2017.

Pakistan. It is not clear whether Trump and his senior officials understand the implications of their alienating a key South Asian ally in the context of US strategic interests in Afghanistan and the broader region.

In the context of the US-Pakistan relationship, this essay will continue in two parts. It first will provide an overview of traditional interests of the US over the past 60 years as it relates to its long-time ally Pakistan and explain the ups and downs of US involvement and policy in South Asia as reflecting these shifting interests. Following this, the logic of the President Trump and his administration in its behaviour and policies will be analysed, as the administration increasingly responds to and acts in accordance with US domestic politics, regardless of the foreign policy implications.

From Communism to Terrorism: The United States in South Asia

US engagement with Pakistan has consistently been framed by broad international security paradigms - the Cold War and the War on Terror. Pakistan's role, in the American perspective, was to support and facilitate US strategic objectives. This pragmatic relationship has, thus, risen and fallen according to the saliency of American security interests in the region. During periods of high engagement in South Asia, whether a result of Soviet aggression or US military operations, Pakistan's support has been strategically and logistically vital. Therefore, the US is willing to overlook points of contention, such as Pakistan's lack of democratic rule; military aggressiveness towards India; support of militant organisations; or nuclear weapons programme. This support is often gained through high levels of economic and military assistance, increasing Pakistan's leverage over

its stronger ally. During periods of low saliency for the US, on the other hand, these points of contention rise to the forefront of American concerns, serving as a justification and cover for its disengagement from the region.

The Cold War

After Partition in 1947, which split British India into the two states of Pakistan and India, the US was initially content to let the United Kingdom take the lead in the region, seeing its struggle against the Soviet Union in Europe as its priority. With the 1947 Kashmir War, the US was also concerned about escalating conflict in the Subcontinent, imposing an informal arms embargo on both India and Pakistan. President Truman, however, began to take a more proactive foreign role under the Truman Doctrine, first introduced in March 1947 during a joint session of Congress. Through economic and financial assistance, this doctrine was meant to counter the spread of communism in vulnerable states, such as Greece and Turkey.[9]

With the Soviet's first nuclear test in 1949, US foreign policy towards the Soviet Union shifted to a policy of containment premised upon military strength and military alliances. This was based on a reformulation of US security policy under the NSC-68, a secret policy paper written by the National Security Council in 1950. In addition to pushing for expansion of peacetime US military capabilities, the document outlined militarisation of the US containment strategy working in tandem with allies, especially

[9] Carl C. Hodge and Cathal J. Nolan, eds. *U.S. Presidents and Foreign Policy* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2007), p. 400.

peripheral ones surrounding the Soviet bloc. The goals outlined in the document included:

1. Defending the Western Hemisphere and essential allied areas so that their war-making capabilities can be developed.
2. Providing and protecting a mobilisation base while the offensive forces requires for victory are being built up.
3. To conduct offensive operations to destroy vital elements of the Soviet war-making capacity, and to keep the enemy off balance until the full offensive strength of the US and its allies can be brought in.
4. To defend and maintain the lines of communication and base areas necessary to the execution of the above tasks; and,
5. To provide such aid to allies as is essential to the execution of their role in the above tasks.[10]

In pursuit of these objectives, US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles visited South Asia in 1953 and asserted US interest in Pakistan as a key Cold War ally due to its strategic location on the southern flank of the Soviet Union and communist China. In 1954, Pakistan signed a mutual defense assistance agreement with the US, becoming a member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). A year later, Pakistan joined the Baghdad Pact, later re-named the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). High levels of US military assistance accompanied these agreements.

[10] National Security Council, "NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security," Government Document, April 1950, https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/nsc-hst/nsc-68-9.htm.

Pakistan was the only Asian nation in both SEATO and CENTO, serving as a linchpin between these two mutual defense organisations that served as a check on Soviet expansion and aggression. America's interests in Pakistan as an ally were further heightened as India under its first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru pursued a non-aligned status within the Cold War. In President Eisenhower's second Inaugural Address on 24 January 1957, he reiterated US concern that newly independent nations could be seduced by communism without rapid economic growth. He, therefore, advocated for an increase in US foreign assistance, resulting in a large flow of American economic aid to stimulate the Pakistan's economy. In the same year, Pakistan gave the US permission to establish a secret communications facility and base for their U2 spy planes outside of Peshawar in order to spy on the Soviet Union.

Some in the US government remained somewhat skeptical of Pakistan's intentions with aid simply contributing to an India-Pakistan arms race. The US Ambassador to Pakistan James Langley wrote in a December 1957 letter to the Assistant Secretary of State:

> I wonder if we have not collectively developed certain generalizations about Pakistan and then proceeded to accept them as gospel truth without sufficient periodical scrutiny…The situation of strength which we have accepted as synonymous with Pakistan has too large a component of wishful thinking…[It is] not too difficult to make a rather convincing case that the present military program is based on a hoax, the hoax being that it is related to the Soviet threat…We cannot afford to

> participate or close our eyes to an arms race between India and Pakistan.[11]

US presidents during this period, however, feared the negative repercussions of removing this military aid. Eisenhower stated that he 'did not quite know what to do about Pakistan' but understood the removal of military aid 'might have severe repercussions on our relations' and 'might even destroy the Baghdad Pact'.[12] President Kennedy also recognised:

> We [have] important intelligence relations with them, and we [do] not want the Pak[istanis] in a moment of violence to destroy CENTO and SEATO.[13]

Following the 1965 war with India, the US, however, stopped all military assistance to Pakistan, denying a request for US military support. This decision came in the wake of the UN Security Council Resolution 211 that called for a ceasefire between India and Pakistan and retreat to their 5th August positions.[14] The US was hesitant to use the framework of their defense alliances, which were focused on the Soviet threat, to become unilaterally involved in a South Asian conflict. This was also coming at a time of thaw in US-Soviet relations, following the establishment of a hotline between the two superpowers with the signing a Memorandum of Understanding in June 1963 and the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in August

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[11] Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 93.

[12] Ibid., p. 84.

[13] Ibid., p. 141.

[14] UN Security Council, *Security Council Resolution 211* (1965) [on calling for a ceasefire between India and Pakistan], 22 September 1965, S/RES/211 (1965), https://undocs.org/S/RES/211(1965).

1963. In the years following the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war, the prominence of Pakistan in US foreign policy diminished by the increased focus on Southeast Asia, especially as President Lyndon Johnson began the deployment of ground troops to Vietnam.

In the early 1970s, President Richard Nixon began to improve relations with Pakistan in order to use Islamabad's help in opening relations with China, with Henry Kissinger's 1971 clandestine trip to Beijing facilitated by Pakistan. This 'tilt' in the US-Pakistan relationship led to Nixon approving a one-time exception to the arms embargo. He also continued economic assistance. The Nixon administration justified continued assistance as a means of influencing the situation in East Pakistan and argued against any 'public pressure' as 'totally counterproductive'.[15] When the Soviet-allied India used the unrest in East Pakistan as an opportunity for a military attack, Nixon was concerned about maintaining the balance of power in Asia, seeing the destruction of West Pakistan as 'the same as a victory of the Soviet Union over China.'[16] The US policy was, therefore, not to protest events in East Pakistan, but only ensure that West Pakistan remained intact.

After diplomatic relations with China had been established in 1972, the relationship again fell into decline. In 1973, Pakistan formally left SEATO, due to its lack of support in its wars with India. During this decade, the US was also growing suspicious of the Pakistani nuclear weapons programme, especially after India's first successful nuclear test on 18 May 1974. The Carter administration would also be critical of the 1977 military coup led by General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq and

[15] Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000*, p. 195.
[16] Ibid., p. 203.

the subsequent hanging of Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, conducted in spite of calls from President Carter and the US Congress for clemency. In 1979, Pakistan withdrew from CENTO, leading to its collapse.

On 24 December 1979, the Soviet military marched into Afghanistan in support of the state's beleaguered communist government, leading to a protracted guerilla conflict bogging down the Soviet Union for nearly a decade. Despite Pakistan's continued pursuit of its nuclear programme under Zia's military government, this issue was overshadowed by US concerns about the Soviet invasion.[17] In 1979, Zbigniew Brzezinksi, the National Security Advisor, convinced President Carter of the necessity of Pakistan's support for the *mujahedeen* forces fighting against the Soviets in Afghanistan and that:

> This will require a review of our policy toward Pakistan, more guarantees to it, more arms aid, and, alas, a decision that our security policy toward Pakistan cannot be dictated by our nonproliferation policy.[18]

During Zia's 1980 visit to the United Nations in New York, Carter invited him to the White House where the military dictator, previously viewed with suspicion because of his human rights record and nuclear ambitions, was now warmly welcomed.

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[17] Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha, *Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-99: In Search of a Policy* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001).

[18] Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (London: Penguin Books, 2004), p. 51.

The policies set under Carter were reiterated by the Reagan administration. They communicated their willingness to live with the military government and the Pakistani nuclear programme so long as the government did not conduct a nuclear test. During negotiations for the continuation of aid, Pakistani General K.M. Arif told the Secretary of State under President Reagan, Alexander Haig, 'We would not like to hear from you the type of government we should have.' Haig responded, 'General, your internal situation is your problem.'[19] The US rationalised the decision to support Pakistan with the argument that conventional military aid would negate the need for the nuclear bomb. While testifying before Congress in 1981, Under Secretary of State James Buckley stated:

> We do believe that our best chance to influence the outcome, influence the future direction of what might be Pakistani intentions, is to help remove the significant sense of insecurity that the nation suffers from today. We believe that if real insecurity can be removed we will not only have a better chance to make sure that explosives are not detonated, but also would be in the best position to use the argument of persuasion that this would not be in Pakistan's best interest.[20]

In May 1984, Vice President George H.W. Bush visited Pakistan in order to 'symbolise and further solidify the strong relationship with Pakistan we have successfully developed over the past three years, a major Administration objective and accomplishment.'[21] His visit included a trip to the Khyber Pass, passing through Peshawar where

[19] Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000*, p. 257.
[20] Siddiqa-Agha, *Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-99,* p. 94.
[21] Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000*, p. 272.

tribal crowds cheered him as they had Jackie Kennedy two decades prior. In 1986, the US offered to provide USD 4.02 billion in economic and military assistance over the next six years.[22]

After the final withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in February 1989, the US had little interest in any large-scale commitments in the region, especially as the Afghan civil war erupted. The necessity for strategic engagement was also undercut by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and end of the Cold War. In April 1996, the US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robin Raphel stated in Islamabad:

> We do not see ourselves inserting in the middle of Afghan affairs, but we consider ourselves as a friend of Afghanistan which is why I am here to urge the Afghans themselves to get together and talk.[23]

Following a proposal for an international arms embargo on Afghanistan during a UN Security Council session, the US also pushed for a non-interference agreement among regional countries.

As interest in Afghanistan declined and the Cold War came to an end, the US was again unwilling to overlook its points of contention with Pakistan, in particular its continued pursuit of nuclear weapons. Following the Soviet exit from Afghanistan, the US stopped the arms flow to Pakistan in 1990. This was a result of President Bush refusing to verify Pakistan's non-involvement in nuclear proliferation under the Pressler Amendment of the US

[22] Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), p. 188.
[23] Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 45.

Foreign Assistance Act, a condition imposed on assistance to Pakistan in 1985. Under pressure from India, the US nearly declared Pakistan a state-sponsor of terrorism because of Kashmiri militants using Pakistani territory as a base of operations. In 1992, the newly appointed Pakistani Ambassador to the US Abida Hussein remarked that the US, with the end of the Cold War, 'had about as much interest in Pakistan as Pakistan had in The Maldives.'[24]

The War on Terror

'You are either with us or against us,' US Secretary of State Colin Powell warned Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf over the phone mere hours after the Twin Towers of New York fell.[25] This reflects the message that President George W. Bush gave to the world in his 20 September 2001 address to Congress. In his declaration of the 'War on Terror', President Bush stated:

> From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime. Our nation has been put on notice, we're not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans. [26]

[24] Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000*, pp. 315-316.
[25] Robert M. Hathaway, *The Leverage Paradox: Pakistan and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2017), p. 15.
[26] George W. Bush, "Text: President Bush Addresses the Nation," *The Washington Post,* 20 September 2001, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html.

In particular, President Bush focused on Afghanistan, as the operational safe haven for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. He demanded, without the potential for negotiation or discussion, the Taliban government turn over all al-Qaeda operatives and their support structure 'or share in their fate'. When the US rejected appeals for negotiations from the Taliban about turning over bin Laden, the stage was set for the military invasion of Afghanistan. US air strikes against the Taliban began on 7 October 2001, officially launching *Operation Enduring Freedom*.

The relationship with Pakistan was now fully connected to the military mission to defeat the Taliban. As the war in land-locked Afghanistan dragged on, the logistics of *Operation Enduring Freedom* would heavily depend on Pakistani support. By 2007, NATO forces were using nearly 575,000 gallons of fuel daily with nearly 80 per cent of it coming from Pakistani refineries. Further, the storage capacity at key air bases accumulated to less than 3 million gallons, making the preservation of Pakistani supply lines vital. The only effective alternative was a much more precarious and lengthy logistical line connecting to refineries in Azerbaijan through Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.[27]

In the early days of the War on Terror, the US quickly lifted the arms embargo on Pakistan in order to secure their support for the invasion of Afghanistan, with drastic increases in both military and economic assistance. US concerns for the nuclear arms race with India, with Pakistan having detonated their first success nuclear

[27] Robert Bryce, "Logistical Vulnerabilities and the Afghanistan War: The Pakistan Fuel Connection," Heinrich Boll Foundation, https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/assets/boell.de/images/download_de/worldwide/bryce_logistical_vulnerabilities.pdf.

weapon in 1998, were put aside in favor of US-Pakistani cooperation as part of the War on Terror. Beginning in 2002, Pakistan also received reimbursements for operational and logistic support for NATO forces in Afghanistan under the Coalition Support Fund (CSF). In 2004, the US declared Pakistan a major non-NATO ally. President Bush would refer to his relationship with President Musharraf, who came to power in a military coup in 1999, as 'tight'.[28]

In addition to vital supply lines, the US saw Pakistan as one of the many front lines in the fight against terrorism. Soon after the US invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan was pressured to move military forces into the mountainous and remote then-Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) to catch militants fleeing NATO forces across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, known as the Durand Line. There were concerns that Taliban forces were strategically crossing the international border in order to avoid capture and use FATA as a base of support for operations in Afghanistan. Given the difficulty of the FATA terrain and the resulting ineffectiveness of military operations on the ground, the US introduced a new strategy in 2004 to target the Taliban leadership - drone strikes.

Following President Barack Obama's election, the number of drone strikes increased exponentially as a means of avoiding 'boots on the ground' while also appearing hard on terrorism. The drones quickly

[28] Ahmed Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), p. 136.

became a source of controversy, however, with opponents pointing to the number of civilians killed in the strikes.[29]

As President Barack Obama took office in 2009, he reiterated the alliance with Pakistan. Vice President Joe Biden stated, 'If you don't get Pakistan right, you can't win [in Afghanistan]'.[30] As part of the new regional strategy, Obama warned that military assistance was not a blank cheque, introducing performance benchmarks to ensure Pakistan was 'rooting out al-Qaeda and the violent extremists within its borders'.[31] The US, on the verge of a new Afghan offensive in 2009, increased the amount of military aid for Pakistan's newly elected civilian government under President Asif Ali Zardari. The US also tripled its economic aid in the hopes of promoting economic growth and political stability.

The US would, however, increasingly become dissatisfied with Pakistan's selective approach to the various Taliban groups operating within its borders. The government would sign peace agreements with some groups, such as the Waziri Alliance in Waziristan which was allied with Mullah Omar in Afghanistan through their Wazir kin across the border, while deploying its military against other groups, such as the Mehsud-dominated Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) which focused its fight within Pakistan. The Pakistani government was, thus, distinguishing between the 'good' Taliban and the 'bad' Taliban.[32] Admiral Mike Mullen, then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated in 2011

[29] Harrison Akins, *"Lawnmowers in the Sky": The Turbulent Past and Uncertain Future of Drone Warfare,* Policy Brief 2:17 (Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy, 2017), pp. 10-13.
[30] Hathaway, *The Leverage Paradox,* p. 11.
[31] Ibid., p. 84.
[32] Ahmed, *The Thistle and the Drone*, p. 73.

before Congress that the Wazir-allied Haqqani network, operating out of FATA, was a 'veritable arm' of Pakistan.[33] The 'duplicity' of Pakistan came to a head with the discovery of, and subsequent Navy SEAL raid on, Osama bin Laden's hideout in the northern Abbottabad cantonment in May 2011.

A month after the bin Laden raid, President Obama announced a troop withdrawal with plans for the US to hand over responsibility for security to Afghan forces by 2014. By this time, the rift between the US and Pakistan was already growing wider following a series of controversial events. In January 2011, Raymond Davis, a CIA contractor, killed two Pakistanis, with the CIA Director falsely claiming he had no connection to the Agency. On 26 November 2011, NATO forces killed 24 Pakistani forces along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, mistaking them for insurgents. In response, Pakistan closed the border crossings for supply runs until 3 July 2012. Pakistan also forced the US to shut down its use of the Shamsi Airfield in Balochistan.

With the drawdown of US troops beginning in 2011, annual US assistance to Pakistan also began to fall. In 2015, the US placed conditions on a portion of its aid, requiring certification that Pakistan was taking action against terrorist groups operating within its borders, especially the Haqqani network.[34] The following year, the Pentagon refused to certify that the Pakistani government had taken sufficient action, withholding USD 300 million in CSF payments. In 2017, a further USD 350 million was withheld. President Trump's

[33] Daniel S. Markey, *No Exit From Pakistan: America's Tortured Relationship With Islamabad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 105.
[34] Hathaway, *The Leverage Paradox,* p. 102.

fateful January 2018 tweet came in the midst of a deteriorating relationship. Despite plans for increasing troops in Afghanistan, Trump subsequently announced that his administration would freeze over USD 1 billion in military payments to Pakistan, with a State Department spokesman stating the money would be withheld 'until the Pakistani government takes decisive action against groups…destabilizing the region and also targeting U.S. personnel'.[35] In February 2018, the US pushed to have Pakistan again placed on the FATF watchlist for failing to combat terrorism financing, limiting their access to funds within the international market.[36]

Donald Trump and America's Domestic Pivot

The cornerstone of Donald Trump's presidential administration has been a pivot to domestic politics. It is through the frame of domestic politics that Trump perceives not only the US-Pakistan relationship, but foreign policy more broadly. While many pundits within the US consider his actions and statements to be irrational and more reflective of the President's sensitive ego, there is an identifiable logic behind his actions related to foreign policy, which can be found by analysing the conditions of his election and the resulting conditions faced by his presidency.

First, Donald Trump, as an inexperienced candidate with no foreign policy or government experience, ran a populist campaign appealing to a strong right-wing, nationalist base, that saw itself as disadvantaged by political elites in Washington and the prevailing

[35] Cristiano Lima, "Trump Administration to Withhold Aid to Pakistan," *Politico*, 4 January 2018.

[36] Kay Johnson and Drazen Jorgic, "Global Watchdog to put Pakistan back on Terrorist Financing Watchlist: Sources," *Reuters*, 23 February 2018.

liberal international order.[37] Reflecting this position, his campaign was light on policy and heavy on emotion, making little more than vague assertions represented in his famous slogan 'Make America Great Again'. A cornerstone of populist politics is exploiting real or perceived grievances held by the broader population, especially in relation to a political elite. Jonathan Chait argues, 'It trades on either cultural or economic grievance. One's enemies possess all the privilege, and we the people must take it back'.[38] This idea of the American public being exploited extended not only to the ruling political class, but also to its allies and international organisations which he called as taking advantage of American power and wealth and weakening the country. During the presidential campaign, for example, Trump stated that he would reconsider the mutual defense clause of the NATO alliance and would defend NATO allies only if they 'fulfilled their obligations to us.' He similarly called the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) a 'job killer' and would consider exiting the agreement with Canada and Mexico.[39]

This behaviour was amplified as a result of President Trump running on his credentials as a businessman who 'makes deals', pledging to run his administration exactly like his business.[40] Therefore, he sees interactions with foreign governments as purely transactional. He pushed for the perspective that if the US government provides money to a foreign government, it expects something concrete in return. He takes this view not only with Pakistan and its perceived

[37] Michael Lind, "Donald Trump, the Perfect Populist," *Politico*, 9 March 2016.
[38] Jonathan Chait, "Trump Calls His Supporters 'Elite', Doesn't Understand How Populism Works," *New York Magazine*, 28 June 2018.
[39] Ginger Gibson, "Trump Warns he could End NATO Guarantee, Scarp NAFTA," *Reuters*, 21 July 2016.
[40] Catherine Rampell, "Trump is running America just like his Business-Right into the Ground," *Washington Post*, 26 April 2018.

lack of cooperation in counterterrorism efforts, but also with NATO allies and the European Union (EU). Trump does not connect military or economic assistance with supporting America's less tangible, long-term political interests.

Secondly, the Trump administration was elected as essentially a minority government. While he won a majority of the votes within the Electoral College, he lost the popular vote to Hillary Clinton, losing by a margin of almost three million votes. This has been a constant concern for Trump and his advisors. Upon entering office, the White House has continued to frame its actions through the lens of electoral politics and continued to hold campaign rallies across the country.[41] Further, for a campaign light on policy and a candidate light on experience, campaigning is a more comfortable experience than the difficult task of governing. Therefore, Trump's rhetoric and policy decisions continued to appeal strongly to his nationalistic base, with no concern for contradictions or acting contrary to long-term US political interests.

There are also institutional factors that contribute to the lack of focus on foreign policy. In his vocal opposition to President Obama, Trump broke with precedent and dismissed all of his politically appointed ambassadors to vacate their post by Inauguration Day, disrupting continuity for many key diplomatic postings.[42] His administration left many of these positions vacant, along with many of the senior-level leadership positions below the cabinet level

[41] Charles Homans, "The Post-Campaign Campaign of Donald Trump," *New York Times Magazine*, 9 April 2018.

[42] Julie Hirschfeld Davis, "In Break With Precedent, Obama Envoys Are Denied Extensions Past Inauguration Day," *New York Times*, 5 January 2017.

appointments.[43] Therefore voices within policy debates are the politically appointed Trump loyalists without the input from foreign policy professionals, diminishing the effect of the Foreign Service bureaucracy to serve as a check on the actions of the presidency. This also keeps the interactions between states at the bare minimum and makes it difficult to create and sustain policy. Without the input of foreign policy professionals, it appears that the Trump administration has difficulty in fully understanding the foreign policy implications of his actions, such as connecting his bullying rhetoric and policies towards Pakistan with his increase of troop presence in Afghanistan, with the strong relationship with Pakistan a key part of any Afghan strategy of the US.

The long-term political interests of the US in relation to Pakistan and in the broader South Asian region have remained consistent following the election of Donald Trump. Given the factors outlined above, however, foreign policy under the Trump administration is not shielded from the vicissitudes and demands of domestic politics. Foreign policy has become another battleground for Trump's electoral politics with his actions reflecting what's best for his administration in garnering domestic support rather than achieving the strategic interests of the US. By understanding these points, the logic underlying Trump's actions in relation to foreign policy becomes clearer.■

[43] "State Department is Riddled with Key Vacancies as Trump seeks Nuclear Talks with North Korea," *CNBC*, 13 March 2018.

Geopolitics of South Asia and Interests of China

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Introduction

In 1904, Halford John Mackinder submitted his famous paper The Geographical Pivot of History to the Royal Geographical Society. From then on, the Euro-Asian continent has been the pivot of world politics and deeply rooted in the mind of Western strategists. From the perspective of global hegemons, such as the British Empire and the United States (US), global geopolitics is a struggle for controlling or dominating the 'pivot area' or the 'heartland'. With the time, great power competition, political and economic power shift, and with it the 'pivot area' or the 'heartland' shifts. American scholar Robert D. Kaplan argues that the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is the Geographical Pivot of 21st Century.[1] In recent years, some Western scholars and officials believe that the 'Geographical Pivot of History' has shifted to the Asia-Pacific region.[2] These arguments provide a theoretical basis for the US 'Pivot to Asia' or 'Rebalance to Asia-Pacific'

[1] Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and the Future of American Power* (New York: Random House, 2010).

[2] Monika Chansoria and Paul Benjamin Richardson, "Placing China in America's Strategic 'Pivot' to the Asia-Pacific: The Centrality of Halford Mackinder's Theory," *CLAWS Journal* Vol. l (Summer 2012).

and 'Indo-Pacific' strategy. In American geostrategic design, South Asia and the IOR are very important components.

Geopolitical Situation of South Asia

Today, the geopolitical situation of South Asia is very complicated, which is a result of three levels of geopolitical competition and cooperation.

First, with the shift of global geopolitical structure, the US is trying its best to defend its hegemonic status and contain competitors, which has caused conflicts and contradictions with Russia, China and other emerging powers, including India. Afghanistan is a part of the 'heartland' according to Mackinder's theory. American military bases in Afghanistan are threats to Russia and China in the long run. The US Afghan policy, previous 'Pivot to Asia' policy, and current 'Indo-Pacific' strategy are contradicting China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Asian Community of Shared Future, and Russia's policies and actions conducted positively in Euro-Asia to counter the pressure from the US and European countries.

The second level is the regional structure problem led by the simultaneous rise of China and India. Indian does not want to see China became the dominant power in Asia, or perhaps it wants to have equal share of power with China. The China-India border issue is the largest obstacle and the most possible blasting fuse for their bilateral relations, just as the Doklam standoff showed. Besides, there are many other issues, such as China-Pakistan relations, Dalai Lama, trade deficit, etc. that will affect bilateral relations. Furthermore, India regards South Asia and North Indian Ocean as its own sphere of influence. It is concerned about China's activities in this region, including Beijing's cooperation with Pakistan, particularly China-

Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). They are alert about China's economic cooperation with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Maldives.

> India believes that there are some hidden geopolitical aims behind the BRI, which is to isolate and surround India. This so-called geopolitical conspiracy is exaggerated by India's strategic and military circles. In order to counterbalance China, India has enhanced its strategic and military cooperation with the US, Japan, some Southeast Asian countries and Western countries, especially through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD). India has also increased its interference in domestic politics of South Asian countries.

At the same time, with the relationship between India and the US becoming stronger, Russia and Pakistan have strengthened their bilateral relations and held joint military exercises.

The third level is India and Pakistan's geopolitical conflict in South Asia. This competition is reflected not only in the bilateral boundary issue, but through Afghanistan as well. In 2013, India and Afghanistan forged a strategic cooperative partnership. Furthermore, this competition has made regional economic cooperation and integration stagnant.

> SAARC can no longer survive because of the conflict between India and Pakistan.

The three levels of geopolitical conflicts are entangled with each other. If such geopolitical competitions increase, it is possible that a serious confrontation, or another Great Game, would take place in

this region with the US, India and Japan on one side; and Russia, China, and Pakistan on the other side.

BRI and Its Influence on South Asia

However, apart from geopolitical competition, there is also geoeconomic cooperation in South Asia. Nowadays, geoeconomic cooperation plans in South Asia mainly include the BRI; New Silk Road Project raised by the US in 2011; International North-South Transport Corridor between India, Iran and Afghanistan; BBIN, BIMSTEC; and Sagar Mala, etc.

The BRI is the top-level design of China's opening-up and economic diplomacy in the new era. It is a geoeconomic initiative. In the report delivered at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, one finds that the BRI has both internal and external implications. Internally, it is a concrete measure of balancing regional development, together with coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, and the development of the Yangtze Economic Belt; and externally, it is part of a priority of opening China further through links running eastward and westward, across land and over sea, by giving equal emphasis to 'bringing in' and 'going global,' following the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration, and increasing openness and cooperation in building innovation capacity.[3]

[3] Xi Jinping, *Secure a Decisive Victory in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects and Strive for the Great Success of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era*, Speech at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, 18 October 2017.

In the South Asia and IOR, the BRI comprises the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM) and China-Nepal-India economic corridor. China wants to cooperate with South Asian and Indian Ocean countries by improving infrastructure, such as roads and ports, and by building industrial parks along roads or near ports.

Furthermore, since the BRI is an open initiative, China would like to synergise it with regional cooperation initiatives and domestic development plans along the Belt and Road, such as the New Silk Road Project of the US, the Indo-Pacific economic corridor and Mekong-Ganga cooperative initiative, to form a regional economic cooperation network that extends from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean, from Central Asia to South Asia.

Impacts

Five years have passed since the BRI formally launched. We have found that it has had some positive influence on South Asia.

Firstly, the BRI improved infrastructure construction and economic development in South Asia, and economic and people-to-people interaction between China and South Asian countries. Under the framework of the initiative, CPEC and many important cooperative projects between China and Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives are advancing vigorously, which are improving these countries` economies a great deal. China has become a main source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to South Asian countries, and even the largest source of FDI to some of them. Many road, railroads, seaports, and dry ports in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan have been finished or are in construction, which improve

connectivity between South Asia and IOR. Ports and dry ports are supported by logistics, industrial parks, maritime industries and the financial sector.

Secondly, the BRI has stimulated South Asian regional connectivity. Encouraged or under pressure from the initiative, South Asian countries have put forward plans to start or revive their own connectivity projects, such as Project Mausam, Spice Route, Cotton Route, Sagar Mala, BBIN, BIMSTEC, Mekong-Ganga cooperative initiative or the Indo-Pacific economic corridor, and the India-Iran-Afghanistan trilateral cooperative project that connect Central Asia and Chabahar. From China's perspective, these projects will not conflict with the BRI. In fact, they are complementary. If these projects could be implemented as geoeconomic cooperative projects, it will benefit regional economic integration.

BRI and Indo-Pacific Strategy: India's Negative Role

'Indo-Pacific' has emerged as a new geopolitical term in recent years. The concept was first developed by Australian and Indian scholars in 2007 and promoted by Americans after the Obama administration put forward the strategic 'rebalance' towards the Asia-Pacific. The Trump administration officially propsoed its 'Indo-Pacific' strategy. By now the US, Japan, Australia, India, Indonesia, and some Southeast Asian countries have formed their own 'Indo-Pacific' strategies, although sometimes they are not called this name. China has no Indo-Pacific strategy, the BRI has a geoeconomic cooperation vision. However, a large component of the BRI is focused on this region. The aim of US 'Indo-Pacific' geostrategy is to balance and even contain China's increasing influence in the Asia-Pacific and the Indian Ocean, with the help of some countries in the region.

The US claims to have undertaken a lot of research on the BRI. But, in reality, what the American policymaking elites are concerned about is that under the BRI a single power would dominate the Eurasian supercontinent with new infrastructure, and that the Initiative positions China as the leader of a new form of globalisation.[4] So, they want to suggest the 'Indo-Pacific' strategy as the main strategic design to contain China's rise and deal with the BRI. Now the US wants to play a leading role in integrating these countries' Indo-Pacific strategy and counterbalance China's BRI as the US Secretary of Defense Mattis showed at Shangri-La Dialogue 2018.

The US places high importance on the role of India in its Indo-Pacific strategy. For the US and Japan, India is the 'linchpin' in the Indo-Pacific geostrategic system. Many Indian officials and scholars appreciate this idea.

> India believes that it might improve its international status and receive financial support from the US and Japan in return for acting as a counterbalance against China and its BRI through the Indo-Pacific strategy and the 'Quad' grouping.

We cannot deny that the BRI brings some negative geopolitical effects, although this is not China's real intention. In essence, the BRI is about geoeconomic cooperation. But, we must admit that geoeconomics and geopolitics cannot be divided completely. Due to deep-rooted strategic suspicions from some countries towards China, the geopolitical factor in the initiative has been exaggerated. Now, against the background of uncertainty of the Trump administration

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4 CSIS, *China's Belt and Road Initiative: Five Years Later,* Centre for Strategic and International Studies (2018), https://www.csis.org/analysis/chinas-belt-and-road-initiative-five-years-later-0.

and dark clouds of Sino-American trade war, geopolitical competition has become the largest obstacle for the smooth advancement of BRI. Some countries treat the initiative as geopolitical competition with a zero-sum mindset. Some major powers in the region and beyond have tried to openly or covertly destroy the infrastructure construction and economic cooperation programmes between China and South Asian countries, sometimes by using the levers of bilateral or multilateral security, military and strategic cooperation. Such geopolitical competition will harm regional peace and stability.

In South Asia and Indian Ocean, India is the largest country. India is regarded as one of the four key countries along the Belt and Road by some Chinese experts.[5] This is not only because of its population, labour resource and huge market, but also because of its political influence towards South Asian and Indian Ocean countries. India's attitude towards the BRI will affect these countries' positivity to participate, and China needs India's cooperation on terrorism, regional stability and security of BRI.

However, Indian strategists and the government believe there is some geostrategic design behind the BRI. Some Indians believe that the 21st Century MSR is just an alternative term that sounds more pleasant and is used to replace the so-called 'string of pearls' strategy forged by Western scholars. Some strategists regard the BCIM and CPEC as parts of the 21st Century MSR, because both corridors lead to the Indian Ocean. Now, India has opted to oppose, delay and hedge measures towards different parts of the Initiative.

[5] The other three countries are Kazakhstan, Russia and Indonesia.

> India opposes CPEC and is delaying the process of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar economic corridor and has put forward its own interconnectivity project. India proposed Project Mausam, Cotton Route, Spice Route, or Sagar Mala projects, and upgraded its 'Look East' policy to 'Act East' policy, to hedge the 21st Century MSR. India is very active in driving BBIN and BIMSTEC.

Moreover, the Indian press has also given immense coverage to the US plan to restart the New Silk Road and the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor initiatives, both of which they claim will rival Beijing's Belt and Road and New Delhi will play an important role in this. India also speeded up its cooperation with Iran and Afghanistan to build Chabahar Port and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). One week after the forum in Beijing, India held the 52th Annual General Meeting of the African Development Bank Group in its western state of Gujarat. At the meeting, PM Modi pitched an 'Asia-Africa Growth Corridor' which in actuality is a duplication of the 'freedom corridor' designed by his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe during his Japan visit in November 2016. In the eyes of Indian media outlets, this Asia-Africa connectivity initiative is a counter to China's Belt and Road.

India's reaction toward the BRI is a part of its Indo-Pacific strategy which has four features: First of all, India prioritises geopolitics over geoeconomic cooperation. Second, Indian hedging strategy towards the BRI has very strong military and strategic implications. The BRI is about economic cooperation, and China will invest a large amount of capital along the route that India cannot match. So, India is determined to adopt an asymmetrical strategy to secure a dominant position in the Indian Ocean. Third, India enforced its military and strategic coordination with the US, Japan and some Southeast Asian

countries which have island disputes with China in the South China Sea. Now, India, the US, Japan and Australia are talking about 'Quad 2.0.' Lastly, there is a convergence of values and norms between India and Western countries towards the BRI. After the BRI forum held in Beijing, Indian mass media and scholars slandered indiscriminately that the BRI violates other country's territorial integrity and sovereignty, lacks transparency, and makes states fall into a debt trap.[6] India enhanced cooperation with the US and Japan in Sri Lanka and Maldives to counter the BRI influence, 'trying to wean Sri Lanka away from the debt trap created by the Chinese.'[7]

From the author's observation, the BRI and CPEC are seen by India as Chinese measures to dominate Asia and establish its status as a global power. Chinese investment and infrastructure construction in South Asia, the Indian Ocean, and along its border are seen as aggressive attempts to surround India and press its strategic space. Given this, it is not surprising that India's reaction is to strike back resolutely and not allow China to gain any strategic advantage.

> India's thinking was clearly reflected in its behaviour at Doklam. India orchestrated the standoff was not just to guarantee the security of the Siliguri Corridor — India's sensitive 'chicken's neck' connecting its central and

[6] Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, "India, Other Nations' Stand in OBOR Summit Prevents China from Full-proof Plan Rollout," *The Economic Times*, 19 May 2017; Rezaul H. Laskar, "CPEC Route through Kashmir could Create Tension with India: UN Report," *Hindustan Times*, 25 May 2017, http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/cpec-route-through-kashmir-could-create-tension-with-india-un-report/story-05fDgjtdFmATT6K13ZJffN.html; Hari Bansh Jha, "Corridor between China-Nepal and India: Is it realistic?" Observer Research Foundation, 6 June 2017.

[7] Indrani Bagchi, "China, ISIS Threats get India, US together in Sri Lanka and Maldives," *Times of India*, 6 November 2017, https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/china-role-in-indian-ocean-region-india-discusses-maldives-turmoil-with-us/articleshow/61514665.cms.

> northeast regions — but more importantly to jeopardise China's BRI. In this way, it can reverse its strategic disparity with China in South Asia and the IOR and tighten its grip on small countries there. Doklam standoff revealed India's strategic ambition and its dissatisfaction towards China's regional policies.

The US, Japan and Australia had been talking for a long time to build an alternative to the BRI in this region. And recently, the US Senate passed the 'Better Utilization of Investment Leading to Development', or BUILD Act, which will create a new US government agency - the US International Development Finance Corporation.[8] The US promises providing USD 60 billion to help the world's poor areas build infrastructure and develop their economy. But will the US fulfill the promise? Time will tell.

As for the 'Indo-Pacific' strategy, what the US wants first is to build an exclusive military group 'Quad', because it enjoys some advantages in the military field. Washington changed the name of its Pacific Command to the US Indo-Pacific Command. On 6 September 2018, in New Delhi, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis held talks with their Indian counterparts - then-External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. They signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), and agreed to hold joint exercises involving the air force, navy and the army off the eastern Indian coast in 2019.

[8] Adva Saldinger, "A New US Development Finance Agency takes Flight," *Devex*, 4 October 2018, https://www.devex.com/news/a-new-us-development-finance-agency-takes-flight-93572.

The 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue mechanism has long been established between the US and its regional allies such as Japan and Australia. With the establishment of the one between the US and India, the latter and Japan also developed the same mechanism in late October 2018 when PM Modi visited Japan.[9] It is expected that the Australia-India strategic cooperation mechanism will also be further upgraded.

Now, in the so-called 'Indo-Pacific' region, there are two different propositions. One underlines its geopolitical and geostrategic significance, advocating the establishment of a political, military and value alliance from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. The other demands countries within the region conduct economic cooperation, expand industry chains and financial networks of Northeast Asia to the IOR to strengthen the economy. The latter is embodied in the BRI of China. India holds a critical position in both propositions. In the first, to construct an 'Indo-Pacific' from a geopolitical perspective may lead to military and strategic competition or conflicts, while in the second, which emphasises geoeconomic significance, there will be more cooperation. From a Chinese perspective, we welcome the US, Japan, Australia and other Western countries to invest in infrastructure in this region and compete economically with China, which will benefit the local people; while we would like to avoid geopolitical competition and conflict.

China's Vision & Interests

Before the BRI was put forward, China's interests in this region were relatively simple, which mainly involved anti-secessionism and

[9] "In Tokyo, PM Modi Announces High-Level Ministerial Dialogue with Japan: India started a Similar 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue with the US Last Month," *Indo-Asian News Service*, 29 October 2018, https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/in-tokyo-pm-modi-announces-2-2-ministerial-dialogue-with-japan-1939400.

boundary peace and stability; anti-terrorism; regional peace; and security of sea lines for trade and energy. With the advancement of the BRI and challenges appearing constantly, China is encouraged to pay more attention to peace and security of South Asia and IOR and try to eliminate the negative effects caused by BRI cooperation. A harmonious Asian Common Community of Shared Future is China's national interest.

China would like to ensure smooth advancement of the BRI which is a top-level design of opening-up and reform. BRI cooperation with South Asian and Indian Ocean countries will improve regional economic development, decrease security problems, especially non-traditional security and human security problems.

At the same time, geopolitical competition, security of overseas Chinese, safety of Chinese investment, dissatisfaction of the local people, and so-called debt trap issues appear. How should China deal with such challenges?

First, Beijing should persist on the openness and inclusiveness of the BRI. It welcomes the synergy of different regional development strategies and plans, other countries' participation - including Western countries' participation - in current BRI projects. For example, Saudi Arabia's participation in CPEC, and the US, Japan and Australia's alternative plans. China is not afraid of economic competition - economic competition is much better than geopolitical competition, conflict and even wars. As a Chinese scholar, I hope geoeconomic cooperation can help defuse geopolitical competition.

Second, China seeks cooperation with India in this region. India's attitude towards the BRI is key for its smooth advancement. At the

Wuhan informal summit, President Xi and PM Modi reached an agreement to conduct 'China-India plus' cooperation. Now China and India are cooperating to train Afghan diplomats. This is just the beginning. It is better to cooperate in all fields and with other countries. Of course, such cooperation must respect other countries' national intertest and will, and other cooperation partners are totally equal in the process. Pakistan also suggested that India should participate in CPEC, and many on the Indian side also have a similar opinion. But admittedly, it is very difficult to persuade India to participate in the BRI. India's domestic politics affect India-Pakistan bilateral relations profoundly.

Third, China should enhance multilateral cooperation in SCO. India's participation in the SCO is a reflection that it wants to maintain balance between the Indo-Pacific Ocean and Euro-Asian continent. With India and Pakistan as full partners of SCO, more opportunities will appear for bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Pakistan, India and China. Pakistan and India cooperated in the SCO anti-terrorism exercise. At the SCO Qingdao Summit, India accepted the five 'connectivities' content of the BRI, although it still rejected the BRI in the SCO declaration. China should also continue her efforts on having trilateral cooperation between China, Pakistan and Afghanistan, including the extension of CPEC towards the latter.

Lastly, the BRI projects should abide by international laws, rules and standards, and local laws and customs, and benefit the local people. This way the security of overseas investment and security of overseas Chinese can be guaranteed. In the light of Pakistan's economic and social development and people's needs, China and Pakistan have agreed to accelerate industrial cooperation and projects that help people's livelihoods and extend the CPEC to the western area. People-

to-people contact and cultural exchange are also important for smooth advancement of the BRI.

One of the aims of the BRI is to realise peace, stability and prosperity of the Western part of China, especially Xinjiang and Tibet. With the defeat of the Islamic State (IS) in the Middle East, many IS militants are returning to Afghanistan, Pakistan and areas around these countries, which is a threat to Central Asia, Russia, and Xinjiang of China. Regional turbulence and instability will hinder the advancement of the BRI. On these security issues, China will cooperate with Russia, Central Asian countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, etc. bilaterally or multilaterally. China will still cooperate with the US on the Afghan peace process and anti-terrorism.

Conclusion

India and Pakistan's relations are the instability factors for the whole region. China should encourage India and Pakistan to maintain a peaceful and stable relationship. Security of sea lanes of energy and trade, and a stable regional security architecture is vital. China's interests in the Indian Ocean are very clear, i.e., the security of sea lines. China should step up efforts to improve maritime economic cooperation, maritime interconnection, civil cooperation, disaster relief cooperation, legal cooperation and other maritime security activities, providing more international public goods collectively with other countries, to ensure the security of sea lanes and freedom of avigation in Indian Ocean.

In the long run it's necessary to build a stable regional security architecture. China should continue to advocate a new security concept and make efforts to build an inclusive, democratic regional security architecture. It should improve connection and cooperation

with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and other regional organisations in the Indian Ocean. At the same time, China should improve maritime cooperation with India and Western countries.■

Russia's Interests in South Asia: From Old Geopolitical to New Strategic Alignments

8

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Introduction

The key concepts in geopolitics are Land Power, Sea Power and Man Power. The first two categories relate to geographical determinism and people are more likely to adjust and adapt to environmental conditions, trying to extract from this rational use - mountains, deserts, rivers and seas can serve both as natural boundaries and as a source of well-being. Man Power refers to the field of pure politics - the human will can determine how to develop territory, whether to use military force, what to do for development and strengthening the national economy, as well as what ideological factors can serve - religions and other forms of collective identity, such as nationalism.

This paper will look at geopolitical factors, including those numerous drivers that push the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the region. Also, it will analyse the perception of South Asia from three positions. To do this, it will be necessary to understand the interests of not only countries of the region, but also other global players. Russia's interests cannot be understood without Western

opposition, especially in the context of current international relations. At the same time, the discussion will take into account global geopolitical turbulence and the tectonic shift from a unipolar to a multipolar world order.

Global Positioning of the Region

There are different definitions of South Asia. Some refer to this region as the territories that were previously controlled by the British Empire.[1] According to the most common version, South Asia includes eight States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

If one considers the region from a global position, South Asia is the Rimland zone - the coastal zone of Eurasia, characterised by active dynamics, confirmed by historical facts of the presence of the centres of ancient civilisations, trade and migration routes, as well as the banality that more than 70 per cent of the world's population lives off the banks of rivers, seas and oceans.

The history of the last two centuries shows that this Rimland has become a place of intense pressure from Sea Powers - first Britain, then the United States (US). The logic of Land Power forced the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet Union to respond in a manner based on instruments of deterrence and then ideology.

If the US had once followed the doctrine of Henry Kissinger's rollback and used the myth of the Communist threat, now Washington has a more difficult time justifying its presence in the

[1] Michael Mann, *South Asia's Modern History: Thematic Perspectives* (Taylor & Francis, 2014), pp. 13–15.

region. In addition, Russia is separated from these countries by a buffer of the independent states of Central Asia. Although the political reality has changed, geopolitical logic remains the same.

Russia-Heartland is interested in integration processes, while Sea Power, represented by the US, is interested in controlling the coastal zone. This is evident from a number of strategic documents. Under the administration of Barack Obama, the focus was on South East Asia and the creation of the Pacific 'pivot' was announced, a new model of the Indo-Pacific region emerged.[2]

Geopolitics of the Region

It is obvious that according to its geopolitical characteristics and significance, there are three important States, which are in the Heartland of South Asia. These are Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The rest of the countries serve as a kind of buffer and their role and status is limited - they fall in the sphere of influence of other actors, although they can act as significant subjects. So, for example, Sri Lanka has become an important country for China.

If one uses the terminology of Zbigniew Brzezinski, proposed in his work *The Great Chessboard*, on the regional scale Afghanistan, Pakistan and India are active geopolitical actors, while Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka are geopolitical centres with varying degrees of importance. Afghanistan was attributed to the actors because of the strategic instability of this state, and the

[2] Prashanth Parameswaran, "Trump's Indo-Pacific Strategy Challenge in the Spotlight at 2018 Shangri-La Dialogue," *The Diplomat*, 5 June 2018, https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/trumps-indo-pacific-strategy-challenge-in-the-spotlight-at-2018-shangri-la-dialogue/.

influence it has had on the policy of Eurasia for the last 35 years. In some sense, it is a negative geopolitical actor.

In the South Asian context, regionalism may be analysed from different contexts i.e., positive and negative.[3] It should also be borne in mind that with the exception of Sri Lanka and the Maldives, whose borders are natural due to their island situation, the remaining six states' borders are a result of intervention of the British Empire and consequences of the colonial policy of London, which is still felt to varying degrees throughout South Asia. This has created the effect of gray zones and hybrid borders, which are characterised by a high degree of political tension. A number of states have certain vulnerabilities in the form of hotbeds of instability, which can be classified as gray zones.

For example, the disputed territory of Kashmir. In addition, India has disputed territory with the People's Republic of China. Killing of Bangladeshi citizens by Indian border guards on the Bangladesh-India boundary are facts not often reported in the international press, but are indicative of the characteristics of Indo-Bangladeshi relations. In India, there is a threat from Maoist Naxalites in the North-Eastern States. The Western States of India may be subject to manipulation from radical Islamists. However, the growth of Indian Hindutva nationalism also provokes instability. In general, most countries in South Asia are characterised by domestic political problems associated with threats of terrorism and separatism.

South Asia also has a regional interstate organisation - South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC. However, one sees

[3] Tariq Mehmood, "Regionalization of Peacekeeping Operations in South Asia," *Margalla Papers* Vol. XX (2016).

that many initiatives within this Association are still at the stage of organisational decisions. This platform can serve as a venue for a regional polylogue, including a discussion of various critical issues.

Theory of Three Worlds

For an adequate understanding of the processes taking place in South Asia, it is necessary to take into account not only the political contradictions and tensions between countries of the region, but also the view from the outside. Therefore, one inevitably has to consider South Asia from three positions. There is a well-known concept about the 'three worlds'. The first world is represented by industrialised countries. The second world are countries in the process of technological development. The third world is represented by countries that have yet to go the way of development. This theory represents the Western point-of-view and has a certain element of racism to it.

In our case, the three worlds are three perceptions of South Asia - from South Asia itself, from Russia (consider Russia's interests in region) and the US, as it still claims to be a global hegemon and has openly declared pursuing its objectives in Asia, some of which are clearly contrary to the development strategies of a number of countries in the region.

Conflict of interest is clear in the framework of US strategy and interests, but it is covered by specific bilateral policies and the general diplomacy of the State Department. The US has traditionally been interested in maintaining the conflict potential between countries in order to face different sides and depending on the situation to take one side or another. Former Secretary of Defence

Ash Carter in the context of American strategy for Asia noted that, 'The heart of that policy is a mesh of political, diplomatic, economic, and military relationships with many nations that has sustained security and underwritten an extraordinary leap in economic development.'[4] His idea is to establish a kind of network for Asia. 'Important to see these relationships as an informal network — not an alliance, not a treaty, not a bloc' - wrote Carter in his *Reflections on American Grand Strategy in Asia*. In his opinion, 'The network structure suits Asia.'[5]

It is significant that in this speculative network structure, he deliberately introduces an enemy element. China is presented as a kind of power that not only opposes American interests in the whole region, but also conducts activities, undermining the sovereignty of other states. Carter notes that maritime and cyber activities are two forms of Chinese aggression that cause concern in the states of the Pacific network, which deepens, according to him, China's self-isolation: 'China's actions in the South China Sea are a direct challenge to peace and stability in the Pacific.'[6] It is important to note that Carter mentions China not only as a military-political actor, but also as an economic power:

> The China-proposed network would include such initiatives as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (IAAB) and One Belt, One Road (OBOR)—both of which would be detrimental to U.S. interests. The IAAB, a

4 Ash Carter, "Reflections on American Grand Strategy in Asia," Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Special Report, October 2018, https://www.belfercenter.org/sites/default/files/files/publication/ReflectionsonAmericanGrandStrategyinAsia_0.pdf [Accessed 3 November 2018].

5 Ibid., p 5.

6 Ibid., p.14.

> potential rival to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, would not match the high standards of the WB and IMF in relation to governance, environmental, and other safeguards—and OBOR is likely to extend China's political influence more than it extends actual property.[7]

India, on the contrary, is described as a potential ally of the US, and therefore as a kind of proxy power, able to be a conductor for Washington's interests in the region:

> India is another example of how the strategic benefits of the principled, inclusive network can overcome hesitation. Once deeply skeptical of U.S. influence in South Asia, India became a more active participant in regional security during my two years as Secretary of Defense than at any time in its history.[8]

It is possible that Carter's position reflects the political instability throughout Asia, described by Robert Kaplan more than 20 years ago:

> The future map - in a sense, the 'last map' - will be a constantly changing representation of the cartographic chaos, in some areas favorable or even productive, and in some violent... This card will be all less and less applied by the rules that diplomats and other political elites have been ordering for centuries. Decisions will mainly come

[7] Ibid., p. 32.
[8] Ibid., p. 29.

> from within the cultures themselves, exposed to those decisions.[9]

But this instability is a special feature - it is neither anarchic chaos nor geopolitical tabula rasa. Rather, these are new opportunities that are associated with global changes, but have their own characteristics of a deep nature. Russia's view of South Asia will be discussed in the relevant section on strategies. Now one has to ask - does Asia look at itself with Asian eyes?

> It is obvious that in South Asia, to a greater or lesser extent in different countries, there is a problem of colonisation of consciousness, although all States are formally sovereign. These questions often become the subject of Subaltern Studies in European and American universities.

And 'the formation of different disciplines, including production of Western Orientalist scholarship on Asia was directly or indirectly related to the patterns of domination of Asia. The disciplinarisation and systematisation of human knowledge was a part of the project of modernity.'[10]

> The attempt of South Asian states to build themselves under the model of Western institutions - hence, for example, the well-known aphorism that India is the largest democracy in the world, although it is not because of the actual caste system - and statements by the officials

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9 Robert D. Kaplan, *The Ends of the Earth: A Journey at the Dawn of the Twenty- first Century*, (Random House, Inc 1996).

10 M.V. Georgekutty, 'Problematising South Asian Area Studies,' 2013, p. 40, https://www.academia.edu/6421820/_PROBLEMATIZING_SOUTH_ASIAN_STUDIES.

of Asian countries regarding common interests and values, thus, look pretty paradoxical.

Interests and Values

Now one needs to decide on the taxonomy related to interests. The concept of interests in politics can differ, depending on which school of international relations is taken as a pattern. In realism, the state is perceived as a rational subject that acts like a human being and is guided by common sense. However, since Thucydides, we know that human behaviour itself is irrational, especially when decisions are made under the influence of anger, greed and ambition. Machiavelli, who is considered one of the harbingers of realism introduced a division of ethics and politics, justifying any kind of action if it leads to the desired goal. At the liberal school of international relations 'achieving peace' is spoken of as a kind of imperative. In practice, it turns into wars and interventions. A kind of marker is the Democratic and Republican parties in the US. The Democratic Party tends to gravitate toward the liberal school, while the Republicans adhere more to realism. At the same time, both theories are Western in origin and they are considered to be standards for international relations at the global level.

In addition, the structures of states differ in substance. In the US, there is a model of iron triangles where lobby groups can actively influence international processes. An example is the decision to invade Iraq in 2003, when neoconservatives controlled the military-political apparatus of the presidential administration. Lobby groups of influence may include both ideological structures and commercial ones, for example, transnational corporations. In Pakistan and Russia, there are other socio-political models rooted in centuries-old

traditions. So even if we try to withdraw some of the formula of net interests (for example, quotas for the supply of some goods or services, the size of duties, admission to the market a certain number of companies) - it will be almost impossible in reality.

Another reason is the different sizes of state economies and the availability of priority sectors in the industry. Russia is among the leaders exporting gas and oil. Pakistan has its own economic priorities, India has its own as well.

> However, in addition to interests, there are also values. Interests can be negotiated, values represent a static phenomenon that are not negotiable. Of course, values can be eroded or deeply influenced by exogenous impact. And with modern technologies of social engineering in certain conditions, the change of value orientations can happen very quickly, especially if charismatic public opinion leaders from the local environment are involved.

On the example of Ukraine, we can see how with the help of external influence, values were restructured by socially-political processes which changed the identity of the Ukrainian people.

Values also include the phenomenon of nationalism, which differs from country to country and from region to region.

> South Asian nationalism, as Sayantan Dasgupta aptly puts it, is 'monstrous,' with much of the discourse surrounding it tending to further stoke conflict between the notion of nationalism as empowerment and as an exercise of homogenisation... Languages of power and the struggle

> for belonging through language are most acute in South Asia.[11]

It is possible to detect such details as, for example, the description of the Taliban as a 'nationalist Islamist insurgency, who, for his own purposes, feeds and manipulates tribal imbalances and rivalries.'[12]

However, on the scale of the value system, it is possible to consider whether the interests of one country can be interfaced with the interests of another country. It seems to me that representatives of the two states will be able to reach an agreement with each other faster if their countries have traditional family values. But if one country has a patriarchal system and another country has legalised same-sex marriage and political feminism is a fashion trend, it will be harder to do so.

Strategies of Russia in General and Towards Asia in Particular

It is important to understand that there is no clear definition of Russia's actions in the international arena. On the one hand, there are a number of documents, related to national security and foreign policy. However, they are more likely to wear desirable and recommendatory character. A number of provisions that are spelled out in these strategies, despite their important nature, have never been realised. For example, in the National Security Doctrine of

[11] Rohit K Dasgupta, "Remembering Benedict Anderson and his Influence on South Asian Studies," *Theory, Culture & Society* Vol. 0, No. 0 (2016), p. 3.

[12] Gopal Anand, "The Battle for Afghanistan: Militancy and Conflict in Kandahar," Counterterrorism Strategy Initiative Policy Paper (Washington, D.C.: New America Foundation, November 2010), p. 14.

2008, it was said that Russia has the right to apply its Armed Forces abroad to protect its citizens. But the case of Ukraine has shown that this item has not found its application, although there were numerous facts indicating the possibility of its implementation.

A number of existing strategies also have some aspects that are difficult to put into practice. In other words, the desire and reality are different. However, a number of excerpts from these documents are needed to show the general trends and some limitations in the strategic thinking of the persons who developed these doctrines. This paper will cover only those items that relate to the region under consideration or reflect the attitude towards the international community.

In the "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)," there are several points connecting Asian issues:

> 79. Russia attaches importance to further strengthening the SCO's role in regional and global affairs and expanding its membership, and stands for increasing the SCO's political and economic potential, and implementing practical measures within its framework to consolidate mutual trust and partnership in Central Asia, as well as promoting cooperation with the SCO member States, observers and dialogue partners.[13]

[13] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016)," http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248.

80. Russia seeks to reinforce a comprehensive long-term dialogue partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and achieve a strategic partnership. Efforts in this area will be supported by expanded cooperation within such frameworks as the East Asia Summit, which provides a platform for strategic dialogue between country leaders on conceptual issues related to the development of the Asia-Pacific Region, the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Defence Ministers' meeting with the dialogue partners.[14]

81. Russia promotes broad mutually beneficial economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region, which includes the opportunities offered by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.[15]

82. Russia is committed to establishing a common, open and non-discriminatory economic partnership and joint development space for ASEAN, SCO and EAEU members with a view to ensuring that integration processes in Asia-Pacific and Eurasia are complementary.[16]

83. Russia views the Asia-Europe Meeting and Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia as relevant mechanisms for developing multi-faceted practical cooperation with the Asia-Pacific States and intends to take an active part in these frameworks. But

[14] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept."
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

> Afghanistan and Pakistan are mentioned rather in negative context.[17]
>
> 97. The persisting instability in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan after the withdrawal of all but a few international contingents poses a major security threat to Russia and other members of the CIS. The Russian Federation, together with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, other interested states relying on the possibilities offered by the UN, CIS, CSTO, SCO and other international organizations will be consistent in its efforts to resolve as soon as possible the problems this country is facing, while respecting the rights and legitimate interests of all ethnic groups living in its territory so that it can enter post-conflict recovery as a sovereign, peaceful, neutral state with a sustainable economy and political system. Implementing comprehensive measures to mitigate the terrorist threat emanating from Afghanistan against other states, including neighbouring countries, as well as eliminate or substantially reduce the illicit production and trafficking of narcotic drugs is an integral part of these efforts. Russia is committed to further intensifying UN-led international efforts aimed at helping the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and its neighbouring states counter these challenges.[18]

Point 15 is about global security and threats:

> The global terrorist threat has reached a new high with the emergence of the Islamic State international terrorist

[17] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept."
[18] Ibid.

> organization and similar groups that have descended to an unprecedented level of cruelty in their violence. They aspire to create their own state and seek to consolidate their influence on a territory stretching from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to Pakistan. The main effort in combating terrorism should be aimed at creating a broad international counter-terrorist coalition with a solid legal foundation, one that is based on effective and consistent inter-State cooperation without any political considerations or double standards, above all to prevent terrorism and extremism and counter the spread of radical ideas.[19]

Next, consider the presidential decree of 31 December 2015, N 683 on the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation. First of all, it should be pointed out that 'as a Central element of the system of international relations, Russia sees the United Nations and its Security Council.' It has a number of items on the South Asian region:

> 88. Russian Federation is increasing cooperation with its partners within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), RIC (Russia, India, China), Shanghai cooperation organization, Asia-Pacific economic cooperation forum, the G20 and other international institutions.
>
> 92. The Russian Federation attaches importance to building up the political and economic potential of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and to the stimulation within it of practical actions furthering

[19] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, "Foreign Policy Concept."

> mutual confidence-building and partnership in Central Asia and also to the development of cooperation with the members, observers, and partners of the Organization, including in the form of dialogue and bilateral collaboration. Particular attention is paid to work with countries displaying a desire to join the Organization as full members.
>
> 93. The Russian Federation is developing relations of all-embracing partnership and strategic cooperation with the Chinese People's Republic, regarding them as a key factor of the maintenance of global and regional stability.
>
> 94. The Russian Federation assigns the privileged strategic partnership with the Republic of India an important role.
>
> 95. The Russian Federation advocates the building in the Asia-Pacific region of reliable mechanisms of support of regional stability and security on a non-bloc basis, the enhanced efficiency of political and economic cooperation with the countries of this region, and expanded interaction in the field of science, education, and culture, including within regional integration structures.[20]

The "Economic Security Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030 (Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 13 May 2017, No. 208)" discusses:

[20] Text of 31 December Russian Federation Presidential Edict 683 approving appended text of "The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy," http://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/OtrasPublicaciones/Internacional/2016/Russian-National-Security-Strategy-31Dec2015.pdf.

- national interests of the Russian Federation economic relations, prevention of its fragmentation, weakening or selective application;
- expansion of partnership and integration relations within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States;
- The Eurasian economic Union, BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), Shanghai cooperation organization and other intergovernmental organizations; creation of regional and TRANS-regional integration associations in compliance with national interests of Russian Federation.

In the "Foreign Economic Strategy" in the section devoted to Asia from South Asia only India is specified. It is noted that Russian non-primary goods and services, including high-tech products, are traditionally in demand on the Indian market. This creates opportunities for increasing supplies of the existing range of exports, as well as for diversification of the structure of trade. The main objectives are to expand Russia's access to Indian markets and joint technology development in selected areas.

It is worth mentioning the "Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation (Approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 646 of 5 December 2016)":[21]

[21] Doctrine of Information Security of the Russian Federation (Approved by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No. 646 of December 5, 2016), http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2563163 [Accessed 6 October 2018].

28. A strategic objective of information security in the field of strategic stability and equal strategic partnership is to create a sustainable system of conflict-free inter-State relations in the information space.

29. The main thrusts of ensuring information security in the field of strategic stability and equal strategic partnership are the following:

- protecting the sovereignty of the Russian Federation in information space through nationally-owned and independent policy to pursue its national interests in the information sphere;
- taking part in establishing an international information security system capable of effectively countering the use of information technologies for military and political purposes that are contrary to international law, or for terrorist, extremist, criminal or other illegal purposes;
- creating international legal mechanisms taking into account the specific nature of information technologies and intended to prevent and settle conflicts between States in information space; promoting in international organizations the position of the Russian Federation advocating equitable and mutually beneficial cooperation of all interested parties in information sphere.

The Fog and Friction of Diplomacy

At the same time, the actions and even intentions of Russia are often misunderstood and used by other parties to promote their own interest. For example, Hillary Clinton while working as Secretary of State after Vladimir Putin announced the creation of the Eurasian

Economic Union in 2011 (it would be more correct to say the reform of the Customs Union), said that Moscow was creating Soviet Union-2.

Thus, the situation with regards to Ukraine and Russia's actions on the one hand, and the West on the other, describe aptly Mearsheimer's opinion, who pointed to the guilt of the West in the Ukrainian crisis:

> The United States and its European allies share most of the responsibility for the crisis. The taproot of the trouble is the enlargement of NATO, the central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it into the West. At the same time, the EU's expansion eastward and the West's backing of the pro-democracy movement in Ukraine -- beginning with the Orange Revolution in 2004 - were critical elements, too.
>
> The West's triple package of policies - NATO enlargement, EU expansion, and democracy promotion - added fuel to a fire waiting to ignite.
>
> This is Geopolitics 101: great powers are always sensitive to potential threats near their home territory. After all, the United States does not tolerate distant great powers deploying military forces anywhere in the Western Hemisphere, much less on its borders.[22]

[22] John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 2014), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russia-fsu/2014-08-18/why-ukraine-crisis-west-s-fault [Accessed 6 October 2018].

Like Mearsheimer, Emma Ashford also notes that:

> Today's confrontational rhetoric and policies toward Russia often ignore reality and highlight the need for an alternative approach.[23]

While Stephen Kotkin argues that:

> Russia today is not a revolutionary power threatening to overthrow the international order. Moscow operates within a familiar great-power school of international relations, one that prioritizes room for maneuver over morality and assumes the inevitability of conflict, the supremacy of hard power, and the cynicism of others' motives. In certain places and on certain issues, Russia has the ability to thwart U.S. interests, but it does not even remotely approach the scale of the threat posed by the Soviet Union, so there is no need to respond to it with a new Cold War.[24]

Realpolitik and Russia's Actions

In Russia's official documents, India is given priority among the countries of the region. In practice too, one also sees close cooperation between Russia and India, especially in the sphere of arms supplies (70 per cent of the arms in India are Soviet and Russian origin). Because of the traditional India-Pakistan confrontation and by virtue of the fact that during the Cold War,

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[23] Emma Ashford, "How Reflexive Hostility to Russia Harms U.S. Interests," *Foreign Affairs,* 20 April 2018, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2018-04-20/how-reflexive-hostility-russia-harms-us-interests.

[24] Stephen Kotkin, "Russia's Perpetual Geopolitics," *Foreign Affairs*, (May/June 2016), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2016-04-18/russias-perpetual-geopolitics.

Pakistan was linked with a number of geopolitical opponents of the USSR, the Russian Federation's relations with this country have not received the same scale of development and do not have the same traditions as those with India. Despite this, the basis for mutually beneficial relations in trade is stable - there are economic, energy and investment spheres between Russia and Pakistan.

From a geopolitical point-of-view, the North-Western regional segment, including Pakistan, is the most significant for Russia. Afghanistan, leading to Central Asia is a region that is particularly important for Russia, bordering Siberia and the Ural-Volga region.

> Potential risks are likely due to destabilisation of the situation in the North-West of South Asia, capable of 'spread' to the Central Asian republics. There is also a kind of risk associated with the aggravation of relations between India and Pakistan, in the extreme case, a military confrontation, including the use of nuclear weapons.

Another threatening area for the region from Russia's point-of-view is humanitarian and environmental. For the moment, refugees from Afghanistan, Pakistan or India have had no impact on Russia's domestic policy, but on the international scale, Moscow always pays attention to this problem as well as to natural disasters and cataclysms, including the problem of piracy in the North Indian Ocean.

Earlier, it was predicted that in order to reduce regional tensions and balance its policies in South Asia, Russia, will strengthen economic cooperation with Pakistan, and will help it, in particular, in the

construction of the gas pipeline from Iran and Turkmenistan, as well as provide assistance in organising electricity supplies from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

After the launch of the Rogun hydroelectric power plant in Tajikistan in November 2018, this interaction is now close to practical embodiment. It has not excluded the implementation of other cooperation projects, in particular, through industry, as well as cooperation in security sphere with the growing use of the potential of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Dushanbe Four (Russia, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan).

> Russia's experience as a mediator for water-sharing between Central Asian countries may be utilised in South Asia because of violations of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) by India as well as problem with water flows after heavy rains from India into Bangladesh.

As for Pakistan, according to Russian experts, despite certain developments in the country such as higher education, including technical education, Pakistan, unlike India, has not found a high-tech niche in the world division of labour. Demand for the services of scientists, engineers and technicians comes mainly from the military-industrial, and especially the nuclear missile complex.[25] This gap may be filled with Russian assistance too. The sale of weapons systems by Russia to South Asian states illustrates the level of

[25] Vyacheslav Belokrenitsky, "South Asia 2013-2020: Opportunities and Risks for Russia," Russian Council on International Affairs, http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/yuzhnaya-aziya-2013-2020-vozmozhnosti-i-riski-dlya-rossii/ [Accessed 23 November 2018].

interaction between these countries.[26] The Rosoboronexport company cooperates with four states, i.e., half of the countries of South Asia - India since 1947; Pakistan since 1948; Sri Lanka since 1957; and Bangladesh since 1972. It is significant that Rosoboronexport makes no sales to states which pursue a hostile policy towards Russia.

Moscow is also interested in enhancing the strategic capacity of such organisations as SCO and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia to form a new security architecture for Greater Eurasia. This approach is directly linked to the realisation of the Russian initiative of 'integrating integrations', which takes into account all actors and all possible changes in the balance of forces in the region, including natural leadership changes.[27]

Transport and energy routes (built and projected too) may be implemented and synchronised in the context of Eurasian Economic Union led by Russia and New Silk Road led by China.

As a rule, considering the interests of Russia in the region, analysts mention only material factors. There is also great interest on the part of Moscow in intellectual cooperation. In order to create a multipolar world order, Russia needs semantic support which is not possible without the active participation of the outside scientific and expert community of South Asian countries.

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[26] Rosoboronexport, " Partner Countries," [Online], http://roe.ru/rosoboronexport/strany-partnery/.

[27] Leonid Savin, "Russian Security Frame for Black Sea Region," *Geopolitica.ru*, 6 December 2017, https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/article/russian-security-frame-black-sea-region.

Although multipolarity can be interpreted in different ways, the main criterion is the attitude toward the US and the willingness to challenge Washington. For example, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly stated that India is committed to multipolarity and he shared that Russia as a country is one of the main poles of influence in the world. But, in fact, India follows the doctrine of multilateralism, actually fulfilling the imperatives of the Obama administration. Although India did not support sanctions against Russia and was not afraid of sanctions by the US for the contract of the purchase of the S-400 systems, cooperation is more intensively developing between the US and Israel than with its neighbours in Eurasia.

Pakistan, on the contrary, took the position of sovereignty and denied its critics in Washington, so it has aroused considerable interest in Russia as an emergent power. This window of opportunity can be favourably used by two parties.

Conclusion

In the current geopolitical situation and in light of the irresponsible behaviour of the US (and its satellites) on the world stage, the implementation of joint Russian-Pakistani projects, including military cooperation, will help strengthen security in Eurasia in the interests of all countries.

Non-Western theories of International Relations, as sovereign intellectual developments supporting the discourse on multipolarity, will be in great demand in the academic circles of Russia. In addition, discussions on non-Western approaches to IR and alternative political theories can not only be a bond for a dialogue of

a new quality between Russia and the countries of South Asia, but also lay additional foundations for rethinking regionalism. South Asia is part of Eurasia, and Russia is interested in strengthening its stability and the predictability of the actions of all its actors.■

From Geopolitics to Geoeconomic Trajectories

- **Investing in Peace: Economic Interdependence in South Asia**
  Dr Huma Baqai & Sabiha Mehreen

- **Moving from Conflict Management to Conflict Resolution: Way Out for India and Pakistan**
  Dr Naeem Ahmed

- **Sino-US Geopolitical Competition: Implications for Pakistan**
  Dr Sarwat Rauf

Investing in Peace: Economic Interdependence in South Asia

9

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to review regional integration in South Asia as an instrument of investment in peace, growth and development. The emergence of China as the second largest economy of the world has also resulted in it emerging as an economic growth trigger for the region. This coincides with 21st Century economic regionalism and a more South-oriented world. The theory applied is Neo-Functionalism which explains European integration and may be used to explain the potential modern South Asian integration process with China as a precursor. The paper also dwells upon intraregional integration citing the Eurasian model of connectivity as an example, and how it can be a role model for developing countries. The final emphasis remains on improved relations between India and Pakistan as a prerequisite to economic integration in South Asia.

Economic success does not assure peace, but economic failure and disintegration almost assures conflict.

– Lawrence Summers, American Economist, 2014

Introduction

South Asia, home to one-fourth of the world's population, has only 1.3 per cent of global income and 60 per cent of the world's poor.[1] Distrust, rivalries and unhealthy competition has not allowed the region to achieve the growth, development and peace it deserves. The rationale of vibrant trade, connectivity and economic ties must be released from the clutches of narrowly defined security constructs. In the 21st Century, development is a direct outcome of connectivity. Only those countries and regions are poor that are lagging behind in connectivity, South Asia is no exception.

The Least Integrated Region

South Asia, bounded by the mighty Himalayas in the north and northwest and Indian Ocean in the south, forms a single geographical unit. It may be the least integrated region in intraregional political and economic affairs, but is also the fastest growing region in the world. However, this growth is happening with little regional cooperation. The relationships among nations have been marred by internal instability and mutual mistrust. The fears of political domination and economic exploitation remain on the table. Intraregional trade is only a mere 5 per cent.[2] In comparison, intraregional trade in East Asia and Europe stands at 35 per cent and 60 per cent, respectively.[3]

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[1] D. Iyer, and F. Tariq, "South Asia and the Future of Pro-people Development: The Centrality of Social Justice and Equality," SSRN Portal (1 May 2017), https://ssrn.com/abstract=2932080 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2932080.

[2] S. Kathuria, *A Glass Half Full: The Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia*, South Asia Development Forum (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, October 2018), https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30246.

[3] The World Bank, "The Potential of Intra-regional Trade for South Asia" [Online], 24 May 2016, http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2016/05/24/the-potential-of-intra-regional-trade-for-south-asia.

According to Asian Development Bank (ADB), it takes 32 days on average to complete trade-related procedures in South Asia - the highest in the world. Nearly 70 per cent of the time is spent on the assembly and processing of large number of documents indicating high inefficiency at the institutional level. Improving trade facilitation systems, at par with international standards, could potentially see intraregional trade within South Asia rise by 60 per cent and trade with the rest of the world by 30 per cent.[4]

Over 70,000 years ago and a myriad of civilisations later, a lot has changed within South Asia. What was once a region integrated through its politics and economics, has since turned into a group of nations so averse that they conduct more trade outside the region than within. For example, it is 20 per cent cheaper for India to conduct trade with Brazil, i.e., a country that is 14,766 km away, than with its immediate neighbour, Pakistan.[5] This was an entirely different story at the time of subcontinent's partition when even immediately after the independence movement, 70 per cent of goods produced in Pakistan were exported to India.[6] This is subject to the economic interdependence which can be revived through adherence to removal of non-tariff barriers, liberalisation of visas and normalisation of mutual relations.

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4 "South Asia Least Integrated Region in World," *The Nation*, 3 December 2012, https://nation.com.pk/03-Dec-2012/south-asia-least-integrated-region-in-world.

5 The World Bank, "Pakistan's Trade with South Asia can Rise by Eight-fold – A New World Bank Report" [Online], 5 December 2018, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/12/05/pakistan-could-boost-trade-with-south-asia-eight-fold.

6 M. Syed, "Pakistan-India Trade: Rationale and Reality," *Pakistan Horizon* Vol.65, No.3 (July 2012), pp. 85-101.

History of Regional Integration

South Asia has not benefitted from its spatial continuity. History and subsequent investment in the politics of conflict has also contributed to the situation. Gravity models show that total goods trade within South Asia could be worth USD 67 billion, rather than the actual trade of only USD 23 billion according to the latest report of World Bank on regional trade in South Asia. For example, the volume of formal trade between Pakistan and India, could be fifteen-fold more than existing levels.[7] This has not happened in spite of being a win-win for all countries in the region, irrespective of size, location and endowments.

The real value of regional economic activity has been consistently below potential; the gap based on the gravity model, as reported in the World Bank 2018 report has been widening, from USD 7 billion in 2001 to USD 44 billion in 2015, partly because of the significant acceleration in GDP growth in South Asia relative to the world over that period which brings us to 21st Century regionalism.

When the Indian Council of World Affairs conducted the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947, it served as the first formal platform where questions regarding a (Post-Colonial) Asian identity, Asian unity, regional economy and the need of a wholesome regional cooperation received attention and emerged as 'collective concerns' for the region.[8]

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7 Kathuria, *A Glass Half Full*.

8 Indian Council of World Affairs, "First Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, March 23 – 2 April 1947" [Online], http://icwadelhi.info/asianrelationsconference/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=51&Itemid=137 [Accessed 1 Feb. 2019]; and, C. Stolte, "Orienting India: Interwar Internationalism in an Asian Inflection, 1917-1937," PhD Dissertation (Leiden University, 2013).

However, the period of divergence also began with the surfacing of convergence of interests, as both China and India stood at opposite poles for two reasons - each wanted to presume the leadership role in Asia and China objected to Tibet being presented as a separate state on Asia's map. Consequently, the Asian Relations Organization silently dissipated in 1957[9] followed by Sino-Indian war in 1962 and Pak-India wars 1965 and 1971. The disintegration of South Asia has the baggage of intra- and extra-region rivalries.

The Cold War also did not help. It polarised South Asia even more. Ideological boundaries were created in the region which impacted regional integration. Within a decade, since the Cold War started, both the Baguio Conference held in 1950 and the Colombo Powers Conference in 1954, engaging Pakistan, India, Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Myanmar and Ceylon, failed to produce substantive reforms for regional cooperation, due to distinctive Cold War divisions.[10] These unfavourable situations for dialogue among countries made this period more about leaning into protecting the region from superpower politics and less about regional integration. Moreover, the bilateral relations between Pakistan and India, hostage to the Kashmir issue, water and assets distribution only worsened the process.

Nonetheless, A few notable outputs of the two conferences stood out - one of which included an agreement to convene a meeting of African and Asian nations to explore avenues of cooperation in 1955. A few promises to focus on cultural and energy-based cooperation were also

9 K. Dash, *Regionalism in South Asia: Negotiating Cooperation, Institutional Structures* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 80.

10 S. Gupta, *India and Regional Integration in Asia* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1964), p. 47.

made. The vows yielded little substantive measures, but they did manage to highlight the region's growing desire to move towards greater connectivity and non-alignment.[11] In essence, while a lot was being said, no machinery or institutional means to achieve said targets were being specified or worked upon.

The biggest output of this bourgeoning third world movement came to be known as the Non-Alignment Movement, a political movement that brought the two continents of Africa and Asia together. It proved to be a remarkable platform as it, together with the United Nations, informally enabled the discussion on creating a 'South Asian Regional Forum'.

The final hiccup, before the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) would come to fruition, came in the shape of regional dissent over India's prospects of dominance in South Asia. The Conference on Asian Economic Planners in 1961 in New Delhi successfully established the Asian Institute of Economic Development and a Regional Advisory Group on Economic Development and Planning in Asia, with a strong wave of opposition to India's intention to economically dominate the region.[12] While the world was experiencing an exciting wave of 'old regionalism' during the 1950s and 60s, especially in Western Europe, South Asia did not pick up on it until the 1980s.[13]

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[11] K. Bajpai, and S.P. Cohen, "Cooperative Security and South Asian Insecurity," In: J. Nolan, ed., *Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994), pp. 452-453.

[12] S. Gupta, *India and Regional Integration in Asia* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1964), p. 83.

[13] K. Dash, *Regionalism in South Asia: Negotiating Cooperation, Institutional Structures* (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 81.

What further contributed to the dysfunctionality of regional integration, was the 1979 Soviet invasion and United States (US) proxy war in Afghanistan, where India had indirect stakes in the Afghan war. Pakistan and India opposed each other in Afghanistan, essentially a continuation of Cold War dynamics. The defeated and marginalised Northern Alliance was supported by India, Soviet Union and Iran. The Taliban were frontline players of the US, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

The birth of SAARC was associated with deep-seated suspicion between member states over the organisation's larger aim. This suspicion was primarily derived from the varying political denominations South Asian countries shared (two dictatorships, two monarchies, one autocracy and two democracies).[14] Each denomination, however, was driven by varying regional and international factors.

Regional Factors

South Asia has been transforming post-partition. Most South Asian states have witnessed regime change and all its leaders have had a distinctive approach to regionalism - they all wanted to consolidate their power.

By virtue of geography and economy, India remains the largest state of the region. Since independence, India has been engaged in seven wars, of which four were fought with Pakistan.

[14] Gupta, *India and Regional Integration in Asia*.

> Moreover, the country often uses coercive tactics against smaller states to compel them to tow its policies. It has acquired a number of smaller states both at the time of partition and after, on basis of its illegitimate power. It forcefully annexed the princely states of Junagarh, Jammu and Kashmir and Hyderabad Deccan in 1948. It also captured Goa in 1961 and Sikkim in 1975. India is in a constant state of tension with both Pakistan and China. The sole objective of India's foreign policy in the region is seeking hegemony.

India's annexation of Sikkim in 1975 prompted a fear within smaller countries of the region.[15] In order to deter India's potential expansionism, the logic of regionalist entrapment (the creation of regional institutions to contain hegemonic dominance) was exercised.

1977, Bangladesh's President Zia-ur-Rehman visited India and discussed the issue of regional cooperation with Indian Prime Minister Morarji Desai.[16] This was perhaps the first time that a consolidated view among numerous South Asian leaders emerged. He carried out a string of engagements that helped create some semblance of unity between the South Asian states. He brought the King of Nepal on board in 1979 who had already been advocating for regional integration on the issue of river waters. In 1979, he met the Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene to discuss the same.[17]

Domestically, Bangladesh approached greater regionalism primarily because then-President Zia-ur-Rehman, who came to power via a

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[15] Dash, *Regionalism in South Asia,* p. 84.
[16] S.D. Muni and A. Muni, *Regional Cooperation in South Asia* (New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1984), p. 30.
[17] Ibid., p. 31

coup, wanted to acquire legitimacy through international support. Then, there were issues of being 'India-locked'. Bangladesh shared water and land resources with India and did not want to disrupt the externalities; therein maintaining cooperation with Nepal and India would assure stability.[18] It was in Zia-ur-Rehman and the Bangladesh government's favour to establish regional cooperation and take initiative of policy construction to ensure that their military regime was seen as legitimate in the world and stay in place for a longer period.

Scholars of the region also propounded the initiative of regional cooperation as cultural, social and economic exchange of ideas started taking place at a fairly rapid rate. To this extent, a Committee on Studies for Cooperation in Developments (CSCD) was also established.[19]

Most profound of all regional factors was the economic crisis. Almost all nations were facing acute balance of payment problems. The oil crisis of 1979 only intensified their troubles. During 1974-75, the region experienced an all-time low growth rate of 2.2 per cent, while population growth increased by 2.4 per cent.[20] And with the North-South negotiations at a half and developed countries pursuing a protectionist policy, South Asian countries were propelled to look inwards.

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[18] Z.R. Khan, *SAARC and the Super Powers* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 1991), pp. 31-34.

[19] M. Haas, *The Asian Way to Peace* (New York: Praeger, 1989), p. 131; W.W. Rostow, *The United States and the Regional Organization of Asia and the Pacific: 1965–1985* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 139; K.P. Saksena, K.P. "Institutional Framework," In: B. Prasad, ed., *Regional Cooperation in South Asia: Problems and Prospects* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1989), p. 82.

[20] Muni and Muni, *Regional Cooperation in South Asia*, p. 23.

International Factors

A number of South-South cooperation initiatives took place in the 1970s. The Non Aligned Summits in 1976 and 1979 and Arusha Program of 1979 on collective self-reliance and the United Nations Conference on technical cooperation 1978, all showcased the need for a collective approach,[21] particularly one that was based around economic growth.

Moreover, the new regimes in South Asia encouraged world leaders like US' Jimmy Carter and UK's James Callaghan to visit South Asian states and compel leaders towards establishing amicable and cooperation-based regional models. To that extent, they promised financial assistance on critical projects such as those on water sharing of Ganga and Brahmaputra.[22] Financial assistance made the prospects of cooperation more desirable.

Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan drastically shaped the South Asian security equation, with Indo-Pakistan tensions rising, along with the region's collective security tensions. Pushing thus, the region together and apart at the same time.

In 1985, after much struggle and a hefty 8-year period of negotiations, SAARC finally became the ultimate emblem of regionalism in South Asia. Fast forward three and a half decades, SAARC could not lift off as a successful regional platform due to the authoritative and apprehensive behaviour of the two protagonists. Regionalism, as a process, continues to be under a sporadic existential threat.

[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid., p. 26.

Possibility of Regional Integration in Light of Neo-Functionalism

Cooperation is trickier to track in the realm of international politics than conflict is. Almost every theory is either explaining when conflict emerges, when to expect it or when it will be less preferred as an outcome that will then result in automatic cooperation. Nonetheless, a few theoretical models have emerged trying to explain integration around the world. Neo-functionalism being one of them. It has been accredited for explaining European integration and may be used to explain the potential modern South Asian integration process triggered by Chinese interest.

As described by Ernst B. Haas (1958), over and above technical issues, it is political parties, interest groups, and the views of political elites that influence cooperation. A spillover from one functional area to another is also likely, but conditional on the additional factors.[23]

Political integration is the process whereby political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities to a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over pre-existing national states. The end result is a new political community, superimposed over the pre-existing ones.[24]

This superimposed system appears to have emerged within South Asia following a merge in security and economic platforms. Clues regarding this transition have already started to appear as India and Pakistan took part in a unique, first-time joint military exercise

[23] E.B. Haas, *The Uniting of Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), p. 12.
[24] Ibid., p. 16.

through the SCO. Cooperation is becoming a necessity too ubiquitous to be ignored. This seems to endorse neo-functionalist's key elements that include, the emergence of a 'regional' purpose and convergence of interests. Whereby nation-centric motives will work side-by-side the regions. Haas' argument focuses on how values shape material as well as non-material interests.

> Neo-functionalism can provide a stable premise in order to elucidate a rising South Asian integration. Though poles apart, South Asia and Europe can be comparatively analysed in order to theorise the pattern with which South Asia may integrate in the future.

The inception of European integration was not achieved amid a rosy political background. In fact, little transnational identity and/or trust bounded the European nations together as war wrecked the entire continent. Yet political will, perhaps propounded by the necessity to work together following the war, was high. And the leading nations had liberal economies and pluralistic political set-up that are considered important variables in the road towards integration.

South Asia has all the major conditions that once paved way for European integration. While it does not host pluralistic societies, it is as scattered and disoriented as Europe was post-world war. Not perhaps, so much by the ravages of war, but by other equally damaging elements. In which case, neo-functionalism can explain a great deal. European integration began with the economic sector, and South Asia's emergence as the world's rising economic hub, together with China's unprecedented economic adventures, can offer similar outcomes between the two regions. The key here lies in not looking at the specifics of how the integration will be achieved, rather the outcome that makes integration a possibility since the implications

are likely to cause (as they are) an institutional spill-over as is the cornerstone proponent of Neo-functionalism.

Twenty-First Century Regionalism

While South Asia struggles with integration, the debate on regionalism is undergoing a transformation which may be an opportunity for the region. 21st Century regionalism and global trade governance is driven by a different set of political economy forces. It is a serious threat to the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s centrality in global trade governance, as a rule writer.[25] The multilateralism of the 21st Century is much deeper, where the focus is to reduce discrimination. South Asian regionalism is still very shallow where the focus is on discriminatory tariffs only.

Regionalism has eluded South Asia. A slow start was followed by poor inconsistent progress. Proximity and geographical connectivity is more of a burden than an advantage. The backdrop is that the region is home to a fifth of mankind, with half of the people living in poverty. Moreover, the region is acquiring centrestage on the global platform in the 21st Century. Its fate is critical to the success of global development and global rescue from economic recessions.

> All premise of regionalism among SAARC countries is rooted in the recognition that the various challenges that the region faces cannot be resolved through action in national domains alone.[26]

[25] R. Baldwin, *21st Century Regionalism: Filling the Gap between 21st Century Trade and 20th Century Trade Rules* [online] (Geneva: Graduate Institute, 2011), p. 3.
[26] Ibid.

The rationale of SAARC's genesis is stated in the SAARC Charter which clearly states 'In an increasingly interdependent world, the objectives of peace, freedom, social justice and economic prosperity are best achieved in the South Asian region by fostering mutual understanding, good neighborly relations and meaningful co-operation among the member states which are bound by ties of history and culture.'

> Perhaps it is time to move beyond SAARC where we look at the 21st Century regionalism thrust to serve regional integration objectives of South Asia, where Chinese regionalism in South Asia is guided by a broader comprehensive conception of security that perceives economic development and security as intertwined. China's policymakers see regional groupings as useful in facilitating its acceptance into the South Asian regional economy.

China's efforts to join regional groupings in South Asia date to early back post-Cold War period. In 1996, the then-Chinese President Jiang Zemin spoke highly of SAARC and saw it playing a positive role in promoting peace, stability and cooperation in the region. China sought to engage with South Asia in multilaterals and at multiple levels. In 2000, it became a dialogue partner of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). There has been no looking back since China is a prominent trade partner of every South Asian state, including India and Afghanistan.

Two Protagonists of the Region

Perennial volatility between India and Pakistan, which has only escalated over time, remain the biggest impediment to regional

integration. The 72-year old antagonism between two nuclear armed neighbours has new forms and manifestations in contemporary times. The rise of extremism on both sides of the border has defeated progress. The deteriorating security situation in Kashmir and Balochistan make Pakistan and India even more weary of each other. The desire to hurt and humiliate each other outweigh cooperation and integration objectives.

The theatre of conflict has expanded, the east and west borders are both hostile to Pakistan now. Afghanistan is the new battleground between the two adversaries. The shifting geopolitics of the region has given rise to new alignments. The geoeconomic thrust of the 21st Century, constantly runs parallel with geopolitics.

The great power realignment has further aggravated the situation. The emerging rivalry and competition between Washington and Beijing has direct impact on South Asian politics, economics and integration prospects. India is growing more and more skeptical of Pakistan and China's connectivity paradigm.

India's Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jaishankar stated at the inaugural Raisina Dialogue in 2016 that 'one cannot be impervious to the reality that others may see connectivity as an exercise in hardwiring that influences choices. This should be discouraged, because, particularly in the absence of an agreed security architecture in Asia, it could give rise to unnecessary competitiveness.'[27]

[27] Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, *Speech by Foreign Secretary at Raisana Dialogue in New Delhi* [online] (2016), http://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/26433/Speech_by_Foreign_Secretary_at_Raisina_Dialogue_in_New_Delhi_March_2_2015 [Accessed 31 Jan. 2019].

The US is now actively seeking India's integration in its regional security calculus, as a 'natural balancer' to China and de-hyphenating Pakistan and India in its strategic thrust in the region, to counter China's 21st Century rise.

Both protagonists now have a stated 'look East' component in their respective foreign policy construct, which is totally different, in spite of the fact that both the countries are geographically connected.

Pakistan's Look East

The 'look west' approach to keep out of India's orbit of influence has been the mantra of Pakistan's policy for decades. A major realignment is happening here; a general consensus is emerging that the connectivity thrust needs to drop the look west approach.[28]

The emerging geostrategic realities have compelled Pakistan to diversify its geoeconomic and geopolitical partnerships and develop new politico-economic cooperative engagements.

> The fact that Pakistan enjoys conflict-free, cordial relations with all East Asian countries is a huge advantage. However, the strategic component of Pakistan's Look East is long-term convergence and the alignment is largely with both China and Russia. The security calculus of Pakistan has China and Russia more prominently featured than Washington.

The China-Pakistan link is strong, but the 'Look East' policy of Pakistan has taken a new shape and dimension because of the contemporary relationship between Pakistan and Russia. The Russian

[28] Moeed Yousaf, "Changing Vision," *Dawn*, http://www.citethisforme.com/harvard-referencing [Accessed 15 Jan. 2019].

self-imposed arms embargo on Pakistan was lifted in November 2014, where a landmark military cooperation agreement was signed, which spoke about 'exchanging information on politico-military issues, strengthening collaboration in the defense and counter-terrorism sectors, sharing similar views on developments in Afghanistan and doing business with each other.'[29] Russian Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Maria Zakharova recently said that Russia and Pakistan share common concerns about the Islamic State (aka Daesh) militants gaining momentum in the region, in addition to closely cooperating with Islamabad over the Afghan agenda. Prior to this, Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov appreciated Pakistan's role and efforts for Afghan peace and reconciliation.[30] Russia is closely cooperating with Pakistan in the fight against terrorism and advancing the peace process in Afghanistan.

India's Look East

India's 'Look East Policy', rechristened as the 'Act East Policy' by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, has been lauded as one of India's important foreign policy initiative. It is largely geared towards balancing the increasing influence of China in South East Asia and South Asia.

India seeks active cooperation in the fields of maritime, civil nuclear deals and combatting terrorism from Australia, Japan and Vietnam. India's aim is to not only acquire access to capital investment and

[29] Joy Mitra, "Russia, China and Pakistan: An Emerging New Axis," *The Diplomat,* https://thediplomat.com/2015/08/russia-china-and-pakistan-an-emerging-new-axis/ [Accessed 13 Jan. 2019].

[30] "Russia sees Pakistan as an Ally in the Fight against ISIS," *Pakistan Today*, 1 Feb. 2019, https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2019/02/01/russia-says-closely-cooperating-with-islamabad-in-fight-against-terrorism/.

technology from the West, but more importantly to acquire a strategic backyard to assert its hegemony in South Asia to balance the rising footprint of CPEC and China.

Through the 'Act East Policy', India is not only striving to engage ASEAN member countries, but also countries of the wider Asia-Pacific region in political, strategic, cultural, and economic domains. This is manifested in ongoing attempts to strengthen ties with Australia, Japan, Myanmar and South Korea.

India's 'Look East Policy', was first unveiled during the tenure of Prime Minister Rao, the subsequent governments of Vajpayee and Manmohan both followed it.[31] Prime Minister Modi when moved on from 'Look East' to 'Act East', reasserted it by focusing on Australia and Japan as potential allies. Another dimension is deliberate exclusion of Pakistan.

The 'Act East Policy' of India reflects the rapidly changing geopolitical realities in the Asia-Pacific and increased convergence of interests between India and the US. As part of this policy, India is helping Vietnam build up maritime capacities. It has also emerged as one of the key players in the Asia-Pacific strategic landscape. New Delhi is supported in the region by Washington and its partners. With its growing power, India is striving to expand its influence in the South China Sea.

[31] T. Haokip, "India's Look East Policy: Its Evolution and Approach," *South Asian Survey* Vol. 18, No. 2 (2011), pp. 239-257.

Afghanistan: Part of the Regional Integration Matrix

Afghanistan has been seen in a state of international, civil and guerilla warfare for nearly four decades now. In 2002, Pakistan and its six neighbours signed the Kabul Declaration on good neighbourly relations. The signatories included China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

> The biggest impediment to regional cooperation, facilitating peace, growth and development in Afghanistan and vice versa is the lingering tensions and hostility between Pakistan and India. The conflict spectrum between them now also includes Afghanistan, where both see each other with skepticism, trying to counter each other's influence and use the country for score settling.

China is playing a significant role here too as it has become a major investor for peace and prosperity in Afghanistan, through wallet diplomacy which gets translated into projects like the Mes Aynak copper mine, a USD 3.5 billion project in Logar province.[32] This makes China the largest direct foreign investor in Afghanistan's history.

Moreover, China is perhaps the only country that can exercise quiet influence over Pakistan, the Taliban and the Afghan government because of its economic thrust in the region. Its improved relationship with Russia only helps the situation further. The US has now followed China and Russia engaging into direct dialogue with the Taliban as a way forward to peace. The US, is perhaps for the first time in 17 years,

[32] R. Khan, "China's Growing Influence in South Asia," *The Nation,* https://nation.com.pk/05-Aug-2018/china-s-growing-influence-in-south-asia [Accessed 30 Dec. 2018].

openly talking about withdrawal, and seeing the Taliban as being a key part of the US end game in Afghanistan.

China Factor in the World: Belt and Road Initiative

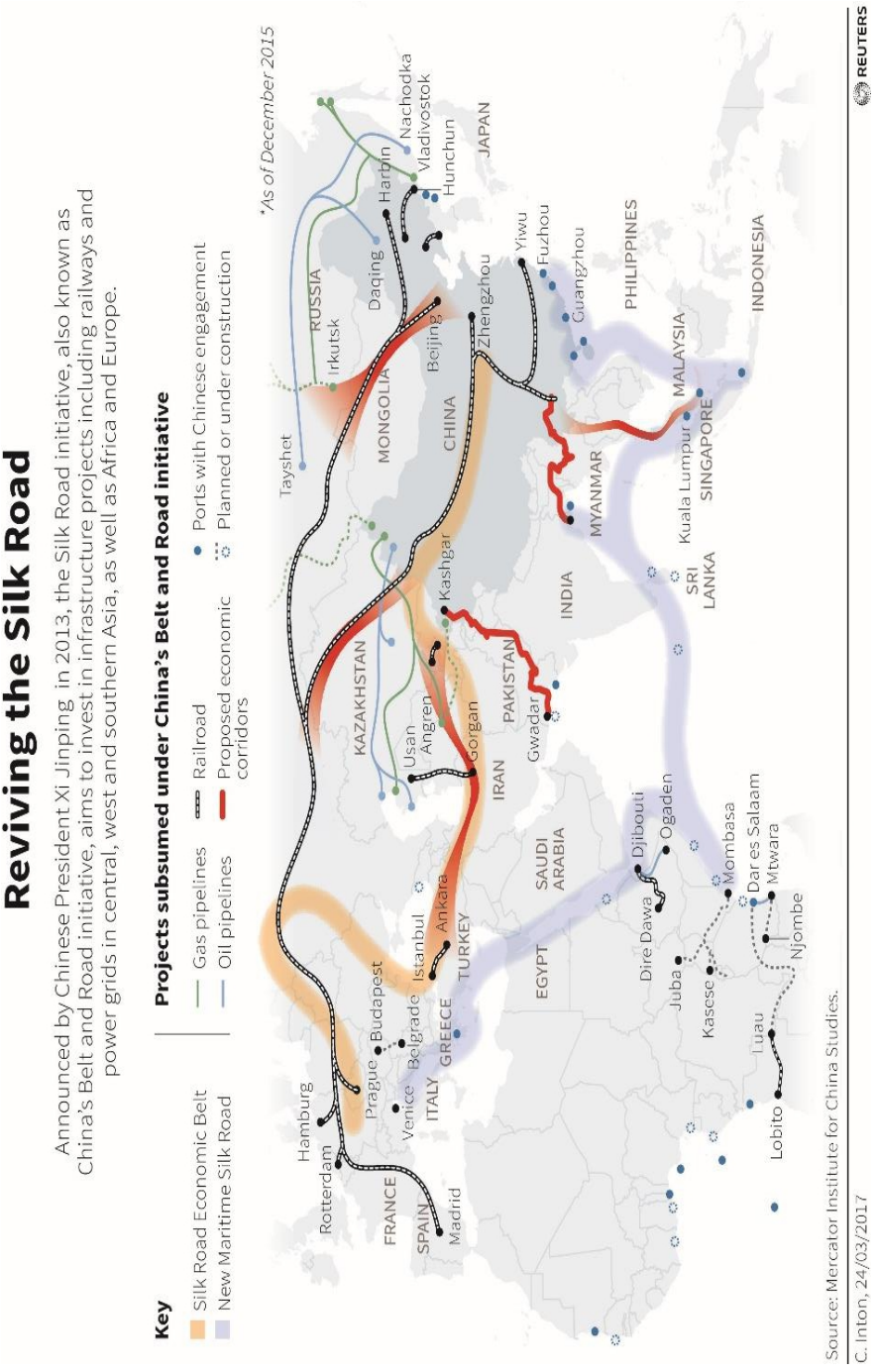
In terms of economic influence, the region is clearly dominated by India as it contributes to about 80 per cent of the region's GDP. However, intraregional trade in South Asia is negligible. China's increased engagement, especially its investments in infrastructure projects, as an extra-regional umbrella, is fostering interdependence and regional integration that far exceed what has been accomplished as a result of SAARC. There is more interaction and interconnectivity than ever before and China has provided the catalyst for this transformation.

China terms OBOR an initiative and is reluctant to call it a 'strategy'. On the other hand, it is increasingly assertive and seeks a role in global governance. It is not just the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in South Asia in which China has invested as a part of revival of its ancient trade route, it has been involved in five more corridors and a Maritime belt planned to create connections among regional waterways from China's east and south coast to the Indian Ocean to Africa and through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait to the Mediterranean.

Chinese Corridors

- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, running from southwestern China to Pakistan.
- New Eurasian Land Bridge, running from western China to western Russia
- China-Mongolia-Russia Corridor, running from northern China to eastern Russia

- China-Central Asia-West Asia Corridor, running from western China to Turkey
- China-Indochina Peninsula Corridor, running from southern China to Singapore
- Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor, running from southern China to Myanmar
- The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.


Reviving the Silk Road
Announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, the Silk Road initiative, also known as China's Belt and Road initiative, aims to invest in infrastructure projects including railways and power grids in central, west and southern Asia, as well as Africa and Europe.
Key
Silk Road Economic Belt
New Maritime Silk Road
Projects subsumed under China's Belt and Road initiative
Gas pipelines
Oil pipelines
Railroad
Proposed economic corridors
Ports with Chinese engagement
Planned or under construction
*As of December 2015
Hamburg
Rotterdam
FRANCE
SPAIN
Madrid
Prague
Budapest
Venice
Belgrade
ITALY
GREECE
Istanbul
Ankara
TURKEY
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
Djibouti
Dire Dawa
Ogaden
Juba
Kasese
Lwau
Lobito
Mombasa
Dar es Salaam
Mtwara
Njombe
Tayshet
Irkutsk
RUSSIA
KAZAKHSTAN
Usan
Angren
Gorgan
IRAN
PAKISTAN
Gwadar
Kashgar
MONGOLIA
Daqing
Harbin
Nachodka
Vladivostok
Hunchun
Beijing
CHINA
Zhengzhou
JAPAN
Yiwu
Fuzhou
Guangzhou
INDIA
MYANMAR
SRI LANKA
Kuala Lumpur
MALAYSIA
SINGAPORE
PHILIPPINES
INDONESIA
Source: Mercator Institute for China Studies.
C. Inton, 24/03/2017
REUTERS

The China factor may become a precursor not just for interregional connectivity but also intraregional connectivity, trade and development which includes infrastructure development: roads, railways, airports, sea ports, oil and gas pipelines, mobility of goods and people and cultural exchange.

Chinese Development as an Extra-Regional Umbrella for South Asia

CPEC under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was launched by China and **Pakistan** in 2015, with the signing of 49 agreements to finance a variety of projects which is worth a total value of USD 62 billion as of 2017.

India, which was trying to curtail Chinese influence in the region with the support of US, is China's largest trading partner with bilateral trade totaling around USD 84.4 billion in 2018. The two countries have signed 24 agreements and nearly USD 30 billion worth of business deals.

China is playing an important role in supporting **Afghanistan** with the heavy investment of about USD 3.5 billion in multiple projects. As peace of South Asia is largely linked with peace in Afghanistan, China has brought the Taliban, Pakistan and Russia to the table for peaceful negotiations.

The smaller states of the region have also benefitted with the Chinese extra-regional umbrella. China became **Bangladesh's** top trading partner in 2015 by investing USD 35 billion in the country. The imports from China (including Hong Kong) are 27 per cent of Bangladesh's total imports. **Sri Lanka** has also been the leading beneficiary of Chinese infrastructure investment in South Asia, with nearly USD 15

billion worth of projects between 2009 and 2014. China is also bolstering trade with **Nepal**, pursuing road building and hydropower projects. Nepal has also signed several agreements with China, including a permanent arrangement for energy supplies and a transit treaty granting Nepal access to Chinese ports. In **Maldives**, Chinese investment has now enabled more than 20 projects and the largest three of the 20 projects alone will be worth 40 per cent of the Maldivian GDP.

South Asia has all the major conditions that once paved way for European integration. It is as scattered and disoriented as Europe was post-world wars. European integration too began with the economic sector, and South Asia's emergence as the world's rising economic hub, together with China's unprecedented economic thrust, can result in similar outcomes, but greater extended outreach, including Europe and Africa.

South Asia has the potential to become a hub of innovation with its young population well-connected to new global technological developments, opportunities created by extra-regional entities, and a huge enterprising middle class. An important impediment to peace in South Asia is its geopolitics, which remains on the table with its core ingredients: space, territory, territoriality, and power. However, commercialisation connected with geopolitics is making geoeconomics take precedence in the region and thus, the win-win cooperation with China, can make the region developed and peaceful.

The Eurasian Model

With the blurring of ideological battle lines and the establishment of new trade links, a new geographic entity has started to emerge: Eurasia, the supercontinent extending from Lisbon to Shanghai or

even Jakarta. This, perhaps, is a return to an older time, but the dawn of a new age would be a more appropriate description.[33]

The leaders of the European Union and China met at a summit in Beijing to praise 'EU-China connectivity'. China has hugely ambitious plans to connect the commercial worlds of Europe and East Asia via infrastructure links that will knit the vast - and till now seemingly inchoate - land mass of Eurasia together.[34] China has firmly established its economic presence in Europe. It has invested around USD 84.2 billion in Europe, in 2017, compared to its USD 2.2 billion worth investments in 2010. These investments have led China to now control 10 per cent of European port capacity.

Europe may be keen on Chinese investment, but is also skeptical of the Chinese model of connectivity, thus the European Union released a new strategy on 'Connecting Europe with Asia' as its principal guidelines toward connectivity between the two continents, which can be a guideline for smaller less-developed countries. There are three core aspects of the Eurasian model:

Sustainable Connectivity

The mantra of EU's sustainable connectivity is that connectivity has to be economically, fiscally, environmentally and socially sustainable in the long term. It primarily focuses on the challenges of lack of growth opportunities, investments, market efficiency and financial

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33 B. Macaes, *Eurasia, the Supercontinent that will Define Our Century*, World Economic Forum (2018), https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/02/how-countries-can-find-their-place-in-the-new-eurasian-century/ [Accessed 19 Dec. 2018]

34 "The Idea of Eurasia is Once Again the Subject of Geopolitics," *The Economist* (2018), https://www.economist.com/asia/2018/07/19/the-idea-of-eurasia-is-once-again-the-subject-of-geopolitics [Accessed 28 Dec. 2018].

viability. It also includes challenges of climate change and environmental degradation.[35] It has to promote decarburization of the economy and respect high standards, based on environmental impact assessments. To further social progress, it needs to adhere to high standards of transparency and good governance and give a voice to the people affected by the projects, based on appropriate public consultations.

Comprehensive Connectivity

Comprehensive connectivity includes all transport links, by air, land or sea which means digital networks, from mobile to fixed, from the internet backbone to the last mile, from cables to satellites. It also means energy networks and flows, from gas, including liquefied natural gas, to electricity grids, from renewables to energy efficiency. Synergies between the three sectors, sometimes leading to innovative and new forms of connectivity.[36]

International Rules-based Connectivity

EU has guarantees non-discrimination and a level playing field for enterprises and promotes an open and transparent investment environment while protecting its critical assets.[37]

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[35] Joint Communication to The European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee, The Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank [Online], https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/joint_communication_-_connecting_europe_and_asia_-_building_blocks_for_an_eu_strategy_2018-09-19.pdf [Accessed 29 Dec. 2018].

[36] Ibid., p. 2-3.

[37] Ibid., p. 3.

Options for the Region: A Way Forward

Uninterruptable Dialogue

Pakistan and India have had seven rounds of fruitless dialogue; observers even call it the 'dialogue of the deaf' where meetings happen, photo opportunities take place and the glamour and drama of high-profile diplomacy is in full display. However, nothing beyond tepid Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) is achieved.[38]

The notion of uninterruptible dialogue is an Indian submission. Mani Shankar proposed it in mid-2014, saying 'uninterrupted and uninterruptible dialogue which is continued irrespective of what is occurring' is the way forward. More recently, Prime Minister Imran Khan and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi have both re-emphasised the need of uninterruptable dialogue. However, India continues to stonewall all such initiatives. The dialogue between Pakistan and India have taken place in 2015, 2012, 2003, 2001, 1999, 1972 and 1966, under the titles of Comprehensive Dialogue, twice as Composite Dialogue, the Agra Summit, Lahore Declaration, Simla Agreement and the Tashkent Agreement. None of them have served to improve the relationship between the two protagonists. If anything, there is a complete breakdown of talks since 2015. Pakistan continues to offer talks as a way forward and the latest pro-people initiative of Kartarpur was an attempt to once again offer the olive branch to India.

Multiple Trade Blocs

The lack of intraregional trade is a huge constraint in the collective growth of economy of the region. According to World Bank's report

[38] Huma Baqai, "New Trends and Paradigm Shifts in Pakistan," In: R. Bhatia, S. Singh, and R. Marwah, ed., *Transforming South Asia: Imperatives for Action* (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2014), pp. 177-197.

'A Glass Half Full', intraregional trade in South Asia is one third of its potential and yet countries in the region have erected trade barriers against each other, denying people the benefits of proximity.

Pakistan and India can play a proactive role through cooperation rather than competition, and this can be done through strengthening existing blocs reviving those that are non-functional and perhaps even making new. Moreover, the 21st Century regionalism is geared towards not only interregional, but also intraregional cooperation; Eurasia being the most pertinent example.

Reconciliation of Narratives

National narratives and meta-narratives play a vital role in bringing about reconciliation between parties. It works like a lubricant in taking forward peace initiatives. Unfortunately, Pakistan and India's national narratives are both competitive and confrontational. The media that has a very important role in reconciliation of narratives, loses all objectivity when tensions between the two foes are high. It will not be incorrect to say that the relationship between Pakistan and India is hostage to hostile narratives. Election campaigns, especially in India, have Pakistan bashing high on the agenda. A conscious effort to reconcile the narrative to pro-peace will go a long way in improving relations between the two protagonists.

Marginalising Spoilers

The biggest source of risk in precarious peace negotiations between historical foes comes from spoilers. They usually see peace initiatives as a betrayal of key values, and thus, seek either to alter the process or destroy it. Moreover, if peace happens, their relevance is greatly reduced. In most cases, they are fighting for their own relevance rather than the case they portray. Pakistan and India are no different

- sporadic emergence of violence or acts of terrorism, where Pakistan and India are involved in a peace process are not coincidence, but intended acts of sabotaging peace. Those responsible must be identified, exposed and marginalised. The thrust is to blame each other for terrorism and use it to hurt, rather than coming together to defeat the common enemy.

Socialising Populations to Peace

People-to-people contact should also be uninterruptable to create the much-needed critical mass for peace. When governmental relations deteriorate, all other avenues of interactions also get impacted. The cultural and social exchanges are also impeded, issuance of visa for cultural, social and economic interactions is used as a political tool of revenge. Two-way communication, fair trade relations, avoiding conflict and fighting common crises together are all hostage to the government-to-government contact between India and Pakistan.■

Moving from Conflict Management to Conflict Resolution: Way Out for India and Pakistan

10

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Introduction

A realistic analysis of India-Pakistan relations reveals that these relations encompass 72 years of mutual distrust, compulsive hostility, conflict and short-lived hopes. Although in the last 50 years, particularly after the 1971 debacle, both countries have managed to avoid any major war between them, either through bilateral means or with the help of a third party extra-regional power, however, they have failed to resolve their long-lasting disputes, which have diminished prospects of establishing good neighbourly relations between them.

It is a fact that India and Pakistan have been locked into several conflicts, which have engulfed most of the resources of the region. This paper is an attempt to analyse the prospects of conflict resolution between India and Pakistan while arguing that both the countries need to move from conflict management to conflict resolution. Two important reasons substantiate this argument. First, over a period of time, India-Pakistan relations have become more complex and challenging, and need to be seen from multiple angles. In other words, the relations need not to be seen from the

Kashmir perspective only, although, it is the main bone of contention. Second, keeping in view antagonistic India-Pakistan bilateral security relations, there is a dire need of adopting a conflict resolution approach since the conflict management mechanism has only established precarious peace between the two countries. Although both countries in various conflict management mechanisms pledged to move forward and resolve their conflicts, the jingoistic environment has always overshadowed and sabotaged those efforts; and after some time, they have to start the process from scratch.

For further elaboration and analysis, the paper is divided into five parts. The first part defines and discusses the concepts of Conflict Management and Conflict Resolution. The second part evaluates various scholarly perspectives to understand India-Pakistan relations. The third part analyses various challenges to the process of conflict resolution between India and Pakistan. The fourth part emphasises the necessity of resolution of conflicts. And the last discusses some recommendations for effective conflict resolution.

Conflict Management & Conflict Resolution

Conflict Management is an intermediate and pragmatic approach employed to lower the temperature in order to de-escalate a violent conflict. In other words, it is a technique aimed at reducing the negative consequences of a conflict by increasing the positive and optimistic opportunities for all the actors – both state and non-state – involved. It emphasises various measures, which can freeze, though for a short time, the violent conflict that could lead to disastrous consequences for the conflicting parties.

> Conflict management is perceived as a compromise between the hard reality of living with a conflict or seeking accommodation for de-escalating a conflict so as to minimise the costs of violence and hostilities.[1]

On the other hand, a broader Conflict Resolution approach requires 'prevention, management and transformation of deadly conflicts.'[2] Two important factors contribute to the beginning of the conflict resolution process. One, realisation on the part of the conflicting parties about the severity of the conflict; and two, political will to resolve the conflict. Although it is a long and difficult process, it is also a win-win situation and for this it needs real analysis of the conflict.

Different Perspectives on India-Pakistan Relations

In case of India-Pakistan relations, one needs to look at different scholarly perspectives while analysing the conflict between them and applying the conflict resolution mechanism. There are five different perspectives to understand India-Pakistan relations:

Perspective 1: Religious/Ideological Perspective

The India-Pakistan rivalry dates back to the Partition of the subcontinent in August 1947 as their enmity has its roots in the different politico-religious ideologies of Hinduism and Islam. The All India Muslim League's 'Two-Nation Theory' distinguished the

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[1] Moonis Ahmar, "Conflict Management Mechanisms: Need for an Alternate Approach," In: Moonis Ahmar, ed. *Conflict Management Mechanisms and the Challenge of Peace* (Karachi: University of Karachi, 2008), p. 2.

[2] Hugh Miall et al., "Calling for a Broad Approach to Conflict Resolution," In: Monique Mekenkamp et al. eds. *Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peace-building Activities* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), p.29.

Muslims of the subcontinent from the Hindus in terms of religion, culture, traditions, food and livelihood. On the other hand, the hawkish elements in India did not accept the Partition and 'posited it as a great betrayal to Mother India.'[3] Even 'some analysts attributed India's acceptance of Partition to its belief that Pakistan would not last'[4] and that 'Pakistan would collapse in a short time.'[5] They have not yet given up their efforts to unite India.

Perspective 2: Territorial Disputes

Another perspective to understand the hostile nature of India-Pakistan relations is the territorial disputes between them. The Partition after the lapse of the British rule in 1947 also left with some long-lasting territorial disputes, such as Kashmir, which also led to two of three major wars between India and Pakistan. Pakistan considers it an 'unfinished agenda' of the Partition Plan that needs to be resolved according to United Nations (UN) resolutions. On the other hand, India considers it an integral part and refuses to abide by the UN resolutions. Being the bigger party in the conflict, 'India is unwilling to alter the territorial status quo in a way that could provide a basis for an eventual settlement acceptable to the Kashmiri people.'[6]

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3 Iftikhar Malik, *Jihad, Hindutva and the Taliban: South Asia at the Crossroads* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 96.

4 Rafi Raza ed. *Pakistan in Perspective 1947-1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. xxii.

5 Quoted in S.M. Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 9.

6 Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, "Can the India-Pakistan Relations Improve?" *The Herald*, 31 May 2018, https://herald.dawn.com/news/1398537.

Perspective 3: Weak-Strong Dynamics/Question of Power Parity

India-Pakistan relations can also be described in terms of an asymmetry in their power relations that compels the stronger state, India, to behave as a hegemon and a 'regional security manager', according to Rajesh Basrur[7]; while, on the other hand, the weaker state, Pakistan, consistently vying for balancing it out amid persistent fear and concerns vis-à-vis its bigger neighbour. This fear compelled Pakistan to acquire military parity with India with the assistance of security alliances with super / major powers as well as by acquiring nuclear capability. This continued competition has resulted in prolonged and unresolved conflicts between the two states.

Perspective 4: Cold War Rivalry between the US and USSR

The super power rivalry in the post-World War II bipolar international order considerably influenced South Asian politics, particularly India-Pakistan relations. Pakistan's active participation in the US-sponsored military alliances – SEATO (South-East Asian Treaty Organization) and Cento (Central Treaty Organization) – brought the Soviet Union much closer to India. Both the US and the Soviet Union, in order to counter each other as well as enhancing their worldwide influence, needed the strategic support of peripheral states, which on the other hand, desperately needed military and economic assistance from these super powers. Chinese entry into the South Asian politics, particularly after the Sino-Indian War in 1962, altered the equation of India-Pakistan relations. In the

7 Quoted in Riffat Hussain, "Normalization of Relations between Pakistan and India: Possibilities and Impediments," In Jean-Luc Racine et al., Pakistan*: The Contours of State and Society* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.267.

new equation, Pakistan came closer to China; while India moved towards the US. Even today, external actors, such as, the US and China robustly influence and determine India-Pakistan relations, making the region more unstable and vulnerable.

Perspective 5: Cross-border Terrorism and Militancy

Terrorism is also one of the determinants of India-Pakistan relations. India accuses Pakistan of supporting militant *Jihadi* groups, fighting against Indian forces in Kashmir. India denotes it cross-border terrorism. On the other hand, Pakistan rejects this by claiming that it is an indigenous movement for the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris, denied by India. Moreover, Pakistan also blames India for its involvement in Balochistan and Sindh by using various proxy groups.

Challenges to Conflict Resolution

The history of India-Pakistan relations delineates that both the countries have never remained in constant state of normalcy for a long period of time. However, a positive aspect is that both the neighbours have not waged a major war since 1971, in spite of the occurrence of several crises since then. They have managed the crises by not letting them transform into war.

Realistically speaking, conflict management has only yielded short-term results and has not led to resolution of, protracted disputes. The current state of India-Pakistan relations may not help the two move in a positive direction in the foreseeable future.

Three important challenges may continue to haunt the resolution of conflicts between India and Pakistan. First, mutual distrust and antagonistic competition would continue to remain high between

the two most trust-deficient nations in the world. Second, the different and opposite stances on Kashmir has further made the process of conflict resolution more difficult as both the states are not ready to withdraw from their traditional positions**.** For instance, Pakistan emphasises resolution of the Kashmir conflict through UN resolutions; while India considers Kashmir an integral part and non-negotiable. Moreover, Pakistan wants commencement of the dialogue process to alter the *status quo*; while, on the other hand, India wants to retain it by linking the issue with that of terrorism. As long as this gap between the two extreme positions remains wide, any prospects for conflict resolution seem weak. Lastly, the bilateral India-Pakistan security complex has become more challenging as well as extended beyond the South Asian region. The growing relations between India and Afghanistan as well as between India and Iran, is a major concern for Pakistan, and directly impacting India-Pakistan relations. Similarly, Indian reservations over the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the China's active role in Afghanistan are also casting negative impact on India-Pakistan relations.

Why is Conflict Resolution Necessary?

Despite these challenges, there is a dire need for adopting a broader conflict resolution mechanism as a forward-looking approach in order to establish peace in the region. Following are the five reasons to substantiate this argument:

First, continued brinksmanship between India and Pakistan has the potential to escalate into a full-fledged war between them. India and Pakistan are the only nuclear neighbours which are involved in an active conflict with each other. The Kashmir issue has become a nuclear flashpoint between the two states. The world narrowly

escaped nuclear disaster when both deployed over a million troops on the borders after the attack on the Indian Parliament in December 2001.[8]

Second, the changing dynamics to the Kashmiri movement also requires a forward-looking approach by both India and Pakistan. It is a fact that the current level of insurgency in Kashmir is different from the 1980s, 1990s and 2001s. It is more indigenous than ever before. Second, this time it is now being carried out by the young, educated and religiously radicalised Kashmiri youth. The case of Burhanuddin Wani is one of the examples.[9]

Third, the growing menace of terrorism is equally affecting both India and Pakistan, in particular; and the whole region of South Asia as well as the world at large, in general. The unresolved conflicts between India and Pakistan have become a source of inspiration for the extremists in search of a cause. It is not in the interest of either nation to go down the fundamentalist road. This will also go beyond India's secular polity. The two governments should know that there are extremists on both sides of the border and continuation of the present stalemate would benefit them which they could exploit to spread hate and antagonism between the two countries.

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[8] On 13 December 2001, a group of gunmen attacked the Indian Parliament building. 12 people were killed. The Indian government blamed Pakistan for supporting militant *Jihadi* organisations for carrying out the attack. BBC News, "On This Day," http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/december/13/newsid_3695000/3695057.stm [Accessed 6 December 2018].

[9] Burhanuddin Wani was a Hizb-ul-Mujahideen commander in Kashmir. On 8 July 2016, Wani was killed by the Indian security forces in an encounter that led to the eruption of violent protests in the Valley.

Fourth, for economic growth and development, peace in the region is inevitable. CPEC may be utilised as a great opportunity in the conflict resolution framework between Pakistan and India. It may likely ease the stalemate and bring them closer to each other. For instance, Chinese trucks which cover the distance of around 2000 km from Kashgar to Gwadar, will inevitably pass through Hasanabdal, which is around 300km from Wagah. The estimated trade between China and India is over USD 70 billion. China may prefer to use shorter route of Kashgar-Hasanabdal-Amritsar, which is around 700km, than what it is currently using much longer Shanghai-Mumbai sea-route of about 5,500km. And, of course, it would not be a one-way traffic. Indian trucks may also like to use this route. And then, what about likely permission to Indian trucks to proceed from Hasanabdal to Kabul, covering the distance of only 450km?[10]

Lastly, the resolution of conflicts between India and Pakistan will also have spillover effect on the overall security situation of the region, and more particularly in Afghanistan, where the two countries have been pursuing their strategic interests by countering each other.

Conflict Resolution between Pakistan & India: A Way Out

It is true that over a period of time India-Pakistan relations have become more rigid and complex. Therefore, both need to behave in a

[10] "China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Opportunities and Risks," Lecture by Dr Kaiser Bengali, Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, 16 October 2018.

rational manner by recognising that there is no military solution of their disputes.

A hawkish mindset is only interested in sabotaging the efforts for conflict resolution and peace-building between the two countries. It can be safely said that the Lahore Declaration in February 1999[11] and Composite Dialogue in 2004[12] were serious negotiation processes. On both occasions, the two governments had taken bold decisions to undertake a settlement of major issues of discord between them. However, the Kargil incident in May-July 1999 and the Samjhota Express bombings in 2007[13] as well as Mumbai incident in November 2008[14] sabotaged all the efforts. Similarly, a basic groundwork had been done on Sir Creek and Siachen and the two sides had almost reached an agreement during Musharraf's period, the severe

[11] In February 1999, then-Indian Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, visited Pakistan on the inaugural run of the Delhi-Lahore bus service. On 21 February 1999, then-Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Vajpayee signed the historic 'Lahore Declaration', which said: "The respective governments shall intensify their efforts to resolve all issues including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir."

[12] In January 2004, India and Pakistan started the Composite Dialogue process to promote peace, security and economic development in the region. It consisted of eight baskets, which included: Kashmir, peace and security, Siachen, Wullar barrage, Sir Creek, terrorism and drug trafficking, economic cooperation, and promotion of friendly exchanges. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Analyzing the Pakistan-India Peace Process," *Pakistan Horizon* Vol. 60, No. 2 (April 2007), p. 26.

[13] On 18 February 2007, at least 65 people were killed in a bomb attack on a Delhi-Lahore train, Samjhota Express. The terrorist attack was carried out by Hindu extremists, belonging to the Hindu revivalist group, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh. Jawed Naqvi, "Hindu Extremists bombed Samjhota Express," *Dawn*, 15 February 2012.

[14] On 26 November 2008, a series of terrorist attacks took place in Mumbai, India. Over 160 people were killed in the incident. The Indian government attributed the attacks to militant Jihadi group, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

opposition from the Indian Army and political turmoil in Pakistan averted the historical breakthrough.[15]

In order to avoid past failures to resolve conflicts, a new approach for conflict resolution is required. This approach needs to be in accordance with the new trends and realities of today's world of economic cooperation and interdependence in order to ensure a win-win discourse. A step-by-step approach is required for conflict resolution, particularly Kashmir conflict, between India and Pakistan. Below are some recommendations for a new approach to resolve the long-standing conflicts between India and Pakistan:

First, it is a fact that the rigid mistrust has impeded the resolution of political disputes. Therefore, a durable conflict resolution process needs a constructive dialogue between India and Pakistan by removing the element of mistrust and showing political will to move forward.

Second, both India and Pakistan need to show some flexibility for the commencement of a meaningful dialogue process. Pakistan has been emphasising upon the core issue of Kashmir first and then the peripheral issues. India, on the other hand, 'favors a multipronged approach in which the Kashmir issue finds inclusion within a broad

[15] In 1989, then-India and Pakistani Prime Ministers, Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto respectively, came closer to an agreement on Siachen, but the deal could not materialise because of the Indian Army's resistance to the settlement. According to the US confidential diplomatic cables, the Indian Army was held responsible for the on-going deadlock with Pakistan over the Siachen dispute. Quoted in "Wikileaks: Indian Army Poses an Obstacle to Siachen Solution", *The Express Tribune*, 2 June 2011.

agenda pertaining to other bilateral contentions.'[16] This rigidity on both sides of the border is a major hurdle in the beginning of meaningful negotiations. Therefore, the need is to discuss both the core and peripheral issues together. Since the core issue may take a longer time to resolve, it is necessary to have some incentives side-by-side by simultaneously negotiating on peripheral issues, which may easily be resolved. For instance, a major flaw in the Palestinian peace process was that first they negotiated and resolved the minor issues, while the major issues like the future of Jerusalem, the issue of Palestinian refugees and Jewish settlements were left for the final negotiations, neglecting the changing political and economic scenario in the region.

Third, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) needs special attention of both India and Pakistan, whose rivalry has actually overshadowed its function as a vibrant regional economic organisation. For effective conflict resolution, both the countries need to enhance economic cooperation. For this purpose, the South Asian states need to form an effective regional framework on economic cooperation under the auspices of SAARC. In January 2004, the SAARC member countries had agreed to work out a mechanism of regional trade and economic cooperation by establishing South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), with an objective to begin free by reducing the tariff rates and bringing them down to the zero level in a phased structure. Therefore, the need is to speed up the SAFTA process in order to ensure economic cooperation.

Finally, it must be noted that the most pressing problem faced by the whole region and the world at large is the menace of terrorism, which

[16] P.R. Chari, "The Need for Confidence-Building Measures," In: Monique Mekenkamp et al. eds. *Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), op.cit., p. 242.

has been equally affecting both India and Pakistan. In case of Pakistan, the growing terrorism has deeply shattered the fabric of society. Pakistan needs to de-link itself from the militant Jihadi groups.

Being a powerful state, both militarily and economically, India also needs to show a greater flexibility and to start negotiations with Pakistan without any preconditions. Moreover, it needs to address Pakistan's grievances of its involvement in Balochistan and Sindh. The arrest of Kulbhushan Jadhav is a case in point.[17] Moreover, India needs to believe that a weak Pakistan is not in its interest. If India wants a peace in the region, it needs to alter its attitude towards its smaller neighbours, particularly Pakistan, by de-emphasising its hegemonic designs in the region. A nuclear Pakistan cannot accept bullying from India, and New Delhi need not to outstare Islamabad.

Conclusion

The longstanding inter-state rivalry between the two nuclear states – India and Pakistan – has made South Asia one of the most vulnerable regions of the world. It is the region where people have been facing rampant poverty, sharp unemployment, acute illiteracy, economic underdevelopment, political instability and of course lack of peace and security. The abysmal economic situation of the South Asian region can be seen from the fact that it 'generates less than 2 per cent of world income, but it has 22 per cent of world's population, whereas 44 per cent of the world's poor live in this region.'[18]

[17] Indian spy, who was arrested in March 2016 in a counter-intelligence operation in Balochistan. "Pakistan Sentences Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav to Death," *Dawn*, 10 April 2017.

[18] "Arms Race to lead Pakistan, India Nowhere," *Dawn*, 11 June 2011.

It is a fact that both India and Pakistan have employed several conflict management measures, however, most of them have ended abruptly, and generated new conflicts between them. Therefore, it is high time for both India and Pakistan to adopt a forward-looking approach to resolve their outstanding conflicts.

Being nuclear states, both need to understand that they cannot physically subjugate each other. India needs to understand that it is almost three decades that the Indian security forces have not been able to end the struggle in Occupied Kashmir, particularly in the Valley. The urge for independence in Kashmir is still very strong. Similarly, Pakistan also needs to understand that in the post-Cold War era and particularly in the post-9/11 world, the international perspective on insurgent movements has changed. Similarly, both need to realise that neither India can suppress the freedom movement in Kashmir, nor can Pakistan take Kashmir through force. The solution lies in mutual understanding and negotiations.

Undoubtedly, Kashmir is a very complex issue. Therefore, the leadership of both countries needs to show statesmanship and extend goodwill that can find a way out of this impasse. If the negotiations between the two states begin, it may certainly be possible to take into account the issue of Kashmir as well. It needs to be broaden, in which common people may participate by making the foreign policy public. The recent development related to the opening of visa-free Kartarpur Corridor for the Sikh pilgrims to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Pakistan is a good omen. This aspect can be extended to other communities as well. This will have a good impact on the people in both India and Pakistan.■

Sino-US Geopolitical Competition: Implications for Pakistan

11

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Abstract

This paper endeavours to find the effects of the geopolitical competition of two great powers on Pakistan's internal and external policies. A geopolitical transformation, shaped by the moves of China and the United States (US), has made Pakistan a central actor of ongoing competition. The continuing power struggle has introduced a new type of diplomacy in the South Asian region. China is trying to connect to the Indian Ocean through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Certainly, the successful application of CPEC will make China the centre of global trade. Therefore, the US is trying to curtail Chinese efforts to become a parallel power and the impact of this competition is being felt around the world. This paper focuses on the rise of China and ongoing geopolitical competition with the US and its implications for Pakistan. The central argument is that growing friction between China and the US would spur regional tensions and it would affect internal and external policies of Pakistan. In these circumstances, Pakistan must adopt a balanced approach to deal with the two powers.

Introduction

In Asia, dramatic changes herald a new era of geopolitical competition. New actors in power politics with old practices and growing impudence of revisionist powers is a notable trend in South Asia. The influence of revisionist powers (such as China and Russia) has grown and become a challenge for a traditional power like the United States (US).[1] Indeed, global geopolitical competition is steering world politics and the prominent concern is the complex relations between the US, China, Russia, India and Pakistan.

South Asian states have been favouring bilateralism and looking to external powers to help them in their security interests. These changing sub-regional dynamics have prompted China and the US to foster their influences within South Asia. China's attempts to gain the support of neighbouring states for its new connectivity concept and the US efforts to maintain its hegemony in South Asia are illuminating facets of the physical contest.

> Interestingly, Sino-US geopolitical competition appears sometimes as strategic cooperation, however, both states are watchful and gauging each other's engagements in the South China Sea, Indian Ocean, and largely in Eurasia.

Both have a convergence of interests too such as countering terrorism in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the US is worried about the growing economy of China as it is engaged in lowering tensions with rivals and trying to build a zone of peace within which its economy

[1] Michael O'Keefe, "The Strategic Context of the New Pacific Diplomacy," In: Greg Fry and Sandra Tarte, eds., *The New Pacific Diplomacy* (ANU Press, 2015).

can grow. Moreover, China wants to protect itself from the potential US containment strategy.[2]

There is a strong conviction among policymakers in the White House that China's very economic structure is bringing business competition in favour of Chinese companies.[3] The scuffle between an incumbent superpower and a rising challenger is explained in the work of Graham Allison. He maintained that 'when a rising power threatens to displace a ruling power, alarm bells should sound: danger ahead'.[4]

China's economic and military rise, along with its efforts to exert diplomatic influence throughout Eurasia, and the US attempts to recalibrate its strategy across the Pacific to the Indian Ocean are notable power dynamics carrying the 'seeds of potential conflict as well as the hope of greater cooperation' among regional actors.[5] Both powers, the US and China, are projecting hard power in the South China Sea, yet no war has taken place.[6] This paper is an endeavour to find answers to the following questions:

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[2] Muntazir Ali, "China as a Factor of Stability in South Asia: Problems and Prospects," *Pakistan Horizon* Vol. 63, No. 3 (July 2010), pp. 63-75.

[3] Yuwa Hedrick Wong, "The US-China Trade War and Global Economic Dominance," *Forbes*, 11 Sep. 2018, https://www.forbes.com/sites/yuwahedrickwong/2018/09/11/the-u-s-china-trade-war-and-global-economic-dominance/#433b98ba256a.

[4] Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides Trap?* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017), p. 3.

[5] Council on Foreign Relations, "Insights from a CFR Symposium *New Geopolitics of China, India, and Pakistan*," 26 May 2016, https://www.cfr.org/report/report-new-geopolitics-china-india-and-pakistan.

[6] Mohammad Tehseen, "Sino-US Competition: Implications for South Asia and the Asia-Pacific", *Strategic Studies* Vol.37, No. 4 (Winter2017), pp. 1-17.

- How will the US-China geopolitical competition affect regional dynamics in South Asia and Pakistan?
- How will China's increased involvement in Pakistan affect US-China relations?
- In what ways could China, Pakistan, and the US best support stability in the region?

It highlights that China and the US have entered a difficult phase of their relationship because the real power has been diffused in regional actors. Consequently, Pakistan, being a pivotal state of South and Central Asia, has acquired a critical position in the full swing of competition between global powers. Many scholars believe that competition between two great powers has a direct impact on Pakistan's policy:

> As the battling winds from both Washington and Beijing pick up in intensity, and observers wonder who will win out, Pakistan's historical role as the region's weather-vane seems set to continue.[7]

The first part of the paper will explain China and Pakistan's relations and its benefits for the latter. The second part deals with Pak-US relations; and the last part sheds light on the Sino-US geopolitical struggle for power and its discreet impact on Pakistan.

Pakistan-China Relations

China and Pakistan have a long history of friendly relations. The first decade of Sino-Pakistan relations manifested slow progress in ties

[7] Johann Chacko, "The US-China Cold War is now Playing out in Pakistan," *Quartz India,* 3 September 2018, https://qz.com/india/1377225/the-us-china-cold-war-is-now-playing-out-in-pakistan/.

due to their association with opposite security blocs.[8] Eventually, interests of the two states started to converge on the common goal of 'enduring peace' and shifted towards greater stability in the region. Pakistan was very hopeful that China would be a counterweight against India and help in the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Thus, bilateral relations between two states took off in 1965 during the Indo-Pakistan war when the US ended military aid to Pakistan. The relationship continued to grow in the wake of India's nuclear test and Pakistan received significant financial support in the 1980s.[9] Certainly, China and Pakistan have been enjoying complete harmony on international affairs.

> Pakistan played an important role in bringing the US and China close to each other. It persuaded the US to recognise China in the early 1970s and both states started to enjoy cordial relations thereafter. However, economic imbalance between the two is a significantly worrying factor.

Andrew Small sees the relationship as a stool with two legs. He maintains there have been fears that the absence of a solid economic foundation disrupts balance.[10]

With the opening of China's project One Belt, One Road (later Belt and Road Initiative-BRI) and signing of CPEC, both countries have entered a new era.[11] In 2015, China promised to give more than USD

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8 Ali, "China as a Factor of Stability in South Asia."

9 Claude Rakisits, "Path to the Sea: China's Pakistan Plan," *World Affairs* Vol. 178, No. 3 (Fall 2015), pp. 67-74.

10 Andrew Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia's New Geopolitics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 97.

11 Zamir Ahmed Awan, "New Era of Pakistan-China Relations," *The Express Tribune* 21 May 2018.

50 billion package to Pakistan, later, it agreed on further financing for building infrastructure in the country.[12] Indeed, these connectivity projects anticipate significant benefits for the country. However, it is unclear how much China will be spending in coming years. CPEC falls in two domains one is energy production, second, transportation system. Furthermore, several other development projects are coming in due to Chinese investment.

CPEC appears as a ray of hope for Pakistan and China as their future economic growth is rooted in this project. Both countries are cooperating in eliminating terrorist networks; and are jointly manufacturing the JF-17 fighter jets.[13] In fact, Pakistan needs good infrastructure which now China is funding. However, to reduce the burden on its declining foreign exchange reserves, International Monetary Fund (IMF) assistance is also required.

Pakistan is facing several challenges because the direct confrontation between China and the US has started over the South China Sea. China seized the opportunity to be a 'two oceans power' by initiating CPEC, so it is willing to invest substantively in the development of Pakistan particularly infrastructure, road building and improvement in the energy sector. Contrary to that, the US has started to squeeze its aid. President Trump cancelled Pakistan's military and security assistance, and often makes scathing attacks on Pakistan through direct tweets.[14] The US leaning towards India has also become a great concern of Islamabad and Beijing. This new regional puzzle

[12] Salman Siddiqui, "CPEC Investment Pushed from $55b to $62b," *The Express Tribune*, 12 April 2017.

[13] Rakisits, "Path to the Sea."

[14] Madiha Afzal, "The Future of U.S.-Pakistani Relations," Brookings Institution, 12 January 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/unpacked/2018/01/12/the-future-of-u-s-pakistani-relations/.

shows that with the successful application of CPEC, China will be the centre of global trade and Pakistan will continue to help it in balancing Indo-US bloc in the region. With some ominous opportunities, the new geopolitical rivalry, in which strategic competitors are contending through alliances, is baffling Pakistan's political, military, and diplomatic resolve.

Pakistan-US Relations

Pak-US diplomatic relations have been fluctuating since the beginning. Both had collaboration in the defence sector and cooperation in policy matters, however, disagreements over certain issues also appeared. The US perception about Pakistan was to serve as an agent to expand its influence into South and Central Asia and to contain the influence of rival states such as the former Soviet Union,[15] and China. Indeed, Pakistan has been playing an important role in the US-led 'War on Terror'.

In the early 1970s, Pakistan established lines of communication between China and the US, in this manner Pakistan also became the first choice of the Nixon administration. The convergence of interests was visible when the US used Pakistan to expel the Soviet Union from Afghanistan. In 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought the military and intelligence agencies of the US and Pakistan into a partnership.[16] Ironically, Soviet departure from Afghanistan shifted US policy and Pakistan became subject to US sanctions for its nuclear ambitions.[17] In order to curb Pakistan's

[15] Manoj K Mishra, "The Waxing and Waning of US-Pakistan Relations," *Asia Times*, 21 November 2018.

[16] Greg Bruno and Jayshree Bajoria, "U.S-Pakistan Military Cooperation," Council on Foreign Relations, 26 June 2008, https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-pakistan-military-cooperation.

[17] Mishra, "The Waxing and Waning of US-Pakistan Relations."

nuclear programme, the US also put pressure on Pakistan to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The relationship between the two states entered a new period with the US attack on Afghanistan in 2001. In order to eliminate the hideouts of militants from Afghanistan, the US heavily relied on intelligence inputs from Pakistan.[18] Despite its crucial role, the US remained suspicious and cast doubts on Pakistan's support to end terrorism.

> The historical inconsistency of Pak-US relations make it clear that the US is actually not a reliable ally.

In short, the bilateral relations between US-Pakistan face several problems - Washington's dependency on Islamabad fundamentally serves US interests, whether it is to fight a war against terrorism or to build political reconciliation in Afghanistan.

The increasing US favours for India is a part of its Indo-Pacific policy. However, it is not merely Pakistan which is facing new challenges, the US is equally in doldrums. The evacuation of US forces from Afghanistan will transform global politics and this will affect its super power status. Pakistan's geographical location is advantageous, due to which various powers across the annals of history have been desirous of it.

Geopolitical Competition in South Asia

Changing geopolitics has highlighted the interests of the new players and leaders. The considerable peaceful rise of China is contrary to other emerging powers who grabbed resources by attacking other

[18] Bruno and Bajoria, "U.S-Pakistan Military Cooperation."

states; they made colonies and expanded their area of influence by using coercive means. China's economic rise is exemplary and it would be difficult for the US to stop it.[19] Industrial development and infrastructure building are drivers of China's rise. It has acquired resources through peaceful means. This shows that social stability and economic prosperity will be the leading drivers of China's domestic and foreign policy behaviour for the next few decades.[20]

In November 2011, former US President Barack Obama, read out the 'Pivot to Asia' policy[21] aimed to fortify the diplomatic, economic, security and political links with regional actors. In order to reassure its good intent to modernise US relations with regional partners and security allies, the Asia policy was later labelled 'Rebalancing Policy'. Ostensibly, 'Pivot to Asia' is aimed to strengthen US diplomatic, economic and security ties within the region at the bilateral and multilateral levels; and to restore the confidence of US allies. The reduction of military personnel in Afghanistan and the Middle East would lead the US to increase its investments and engagements in the Asia-Pacific region.

> The 'Asia Pivot' policy is largely considered as a US strategy to contain China which is being refuted by the White House administration. Contrary to that, Beijing is proclaiming that the 'Pivot' is a distressing policy that could provoke other countries in the region to raise their territorial claims.

[19] Robert J Art, "The United States and the Rise of China: Implications for the Long Haul," *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 125, No. 3 (Fall 2010), pp. 359-391.
[20] Ali, "China as a Factor of Stability in South Asia."
[21] Ibid.

Some hostile neighbouring states are indirectly getting US help to resolve their issues with China. The policy has ignited combativeness and damaged faith in cooperation.[22] The maritime borders of China that have caused the most trouble in the past two years, are mostly under the influence of the US. Now, in order to assure its neighbours that it is not an aggressor, China needs to use diplomatic language. Under the US' growing influence in this region, it may be difficult for China to follow a balanced approach. On the one hand, China is a major power, and on the other hand, it wants to be regarded as a leading but peaceful neighbour.

In growing economic and political interdependence, a show of hard power could only affect negatively on China. It will earn more confidence and respect in its neighbourhood if it focuses on its peaceful rise. China's fast-growing economy is becoming a formidable threat to the US because it is becoming a political and military competitor.[23]

> The US trade war with China is categorically about blocking its expanding global economic influence and slowing down China's technological advancement. Chinese investment in the US technology sector has come under strict scrutiny where governmental agencies have been put on high alert against industrial espionage.[24]

This situation is referred to as the Thucydides Trap[25] which theorises a complicated situation that occurs when a ruling power feels itself

[22] Robert S. Ross, "The Problem with the Pivot: Obama's New Asia Policy is Unnecessary and Counterproductive," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2012), pp. 70-82.
[23] Allison, *Destined for War*.
[24] Wong, "The US-China Trade War and Global Economic Dominance."
[25] Allison, *Destined for War*.

being displaced by a rising power. This can trigger a war and have dangerous implications in international affairs. Allison's work is an innuendo of a future war between the US and China. However, 4 out of 12 of his cases indicate that war can only be avoided with some fine modifications in dealings with other states:

> The four cases that avoided war did so only because of huge, painful adjustments in attitudes and actions on the part of the challenger and challenged alike.[26]

The historical account shows that ruling powers can cope with challenges and manage contending relations without initiating a war. China made advances to engage its old rivals such as India and Japan, and it has tried to mollify its image by substituting the term 'Rising China' with 'Peaceful Rise'.[27]

> The present US policy in South Asia impinges on Pakistan's foreign policy. India is being used as a regional surrogate working to derail Chinese BRI. Afghanistan is a bridge between South and Central Asia, but nowadays it is more active as a separator between the two regions.

The US is reluctantly reducing military personnel in Afghanistan and other areas, to move towards the Asia-Pacific region. In this context, the Sino-US geopolitical competition has become indicative of the Anglo-Russian rivalry of the 19th Century. Whatever the stream would be, it will affect Pakistan's foreign and domestic policies. It appears that India's sequential efforts to destabilise Pakistan will linger on. Iran, despite its assertions of brotherly relations with

[26] Ibid.

[27] Asma Rashid, "Pak-China Partnership: US and India's Response," *Margalla Papers* Vol. XXI (2017), pp. 247-258 (257).

Pakistan, would continue to pursue its own strategic interests as Iranian-Indian economic ties have become a permanent feature. Moreover, Iran's efforts to upkeep its loyal circles in Afghanistan would be a serious concern for Pakistan.

Implications for Pakistan

In this background, Pakistan should have a balanced approach and focus on economic fixes to deal with global powers. Pakistan's economy obviously needs reform to better serve its people. In this regard, China is the best partner to rely on.

Pakistan's climate and the terrain is a blessing for making it a natural agricultural economy. Unfortunately, the agricultural sector has been facing challenges since decades. Despite having the top ten agro goods, namely cotton, rice, mangoes, sugarcane, wheat, milk, meat, chickpeas and citrus fruits, a poor economy and lack of modern techniques curb sustainable growth. In this regard, China's successful agriculture experience would be helpful for Pakistan as Chinese agricultural reforms pulled almost 500 million people out of poverty within just six years.[28] Its agricultural enterprises are now mature and financially strong.

China could make joint ventures with local entrepreneurs to help them flourish and to utilise the agricultural potential of Pakistan. This would help Pakistan's economy to grow and it would be an excellent opportunity for Chinese entrepreneurs to make a profit. It would also compensate Chinese agricultural sector for any trouble

[28] Zamir Awan, "How Pakistan could Gain from US-China Trade War," *Asia Time*s, 10 August 2018, http://www.atimes.com/how-pakistan-could-gain-from-us-china-trade-war/.

caused by US export of agricultural produce.[29] Moreover, Chinese investors are currently eager to make investments in Pakistan, as Zhu Rongji opined:

> Investors are like pigeons when a government frightens them with poor decisions they all fly off together.[30]

In order to slow down BRI and CPEC, the US put limitations on financial assistance and it will continue to place conditions on the in this case. The US does not want the IMF bailout package to be used to repay China. However, curtailing bailout money would cost the US too as an important ally in the region would be lost. All the punitive measures are indicating that the US is giving priority to its newest allies - India and Afghanistan - to contain China's connectivity projects.

Recommendations

In light of the above discussion, the paper recommends the following:

- In order to avoid direct confrontation and to deal with issues diplomatically, Pak-US leaders must avoid confrontation publically rather they should use private diplomatic channels to improve relations.
- Internally, Pakistan should focus on its economic development. Elimination of extremist mindsets and industrial development must be the government's priority.

[29] Ibid.
[30] Pervez Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir* (New York: Free Press, 2006), p. 189.

- Externally, Pakistan should continue to strengthen its relations with China; and find a solution to the existing irritants in its relations with Iran and Afghanistan.
- Geopolitical competition has brought additional ramifications for India and Pakistan relations. Hence, resolution of the Kashmir issue and other disputes with India must be a priority. Multilateral platforms of negotiations can be used in this regard.
- Bilateral relations between Pakistan and Russia are on track and must be strengthened.
- In order to ensure peace in the region, the US must avoid its anti-BRI line of thinking and must become a stakeholder in the connectivity project.
- Pakistan should not put all eggs in one basket. Other regional actors must be persuaded to convince the US that regional peace is not possible without Pakistan.■

Annexures

Annex 1:
Biographies

Annex 2:
IPRI Publications

Biographies

Dr Ahmed Ijaz Malik is Assistant Professor at School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Dr Malik did his PhD in International Relations from Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. He has recently written and published on US Grand Strategy towards Middle East and China's geoeconomic strategies in South Asia. His book *US Foreign Policy and the Gulf Wars: Decision Making and International Relations* won the best book award in Social Sciences by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.

Mr Harrison Akins is a PhD candidate in Political Science at the University of Tennessee, USA. He earned MA in Liberal Arts from Saint John's College, and an MSc in Political Theory from the London School of Economics. Mr Akins has been an Ibn Khaldun Chair Research Fellow at the American University's School of International Service. Two major research projects which he undertook include *The Thistle and the Drone: How America's War on Terror Became a Global War on Tribal Islam*; and *Journey into Europe: Islam, Immigration, and Identity*. He is a two-time recipient of the State Department's Critical Language Scholarship to study Urdu in Lucknow, India.

Dr Huma Baqai is Associate Dean, Faculty of Business Administration; and an Associate Professor of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts at the Institute of Business Administration in Karachi, Pakistan. Dr Baqai is working with both national and international media as an International Relations expert and political analyst since 1999 and has served both as an analyst and an anchorperson in PTV,

followed by Chanel 24 and News One. She is also associated with Radio Pakistan and Voice of America as an analyst. She is a member of Board of Directors of more than ten educational institutions and private and non-profit organisations. She is also a certified corporate trainer from the International Academy for Leadership, Gummersbach, Germany. Dr Baqai is a visiting professor at Air War College, National Institute of Management, Karachi. She is also part of Track-II diplomacy between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Dr Joshua T. White is Associate Professor of Practice of South Asia Studies and Fellow at the Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asia Studies at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) in Washington. Dr White is also a Non-resident Fellow in the Foreign Policy programme at the Brookings Institution. He previously served at the White House as Senior Advisor & Director for South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council, where he advised the President and National Security Advisor on South Asia policy issues pertaining to India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Dr White has been Senior Associate and Co-Director of the South Asia programme at the Stimson Centre, Washington; and Senior Advisor for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs at the Office of the Secretary of Defence.

Mr Leonid Savin is the Founder and Chief Editor of *Journal of Eurasian Affairs*, Moscow, Russia. He is a geopolitical analyst, and head of the international Eurasian movement. Mr Savin has authored numerous books on geopolitics, conflicts, international relations and political philosophy published in Russia, Ukraine, Spain, Serbia and Iran.

Dr Liu Zongyi is Senior Fellow at the Institute for International Strategic Studies and Centre for Asia Pacific Studies, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS) in China. Dr Zongyi obtained Masters and PhD degrees in International Relations from China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing. His research interests are India's economy and foreign policy, China's foreign policy, BRICS, and G-20. He has published more than 20 papers in Chinese and overseas journals on these subjects. Dr Zongyi is Visiting Fellow at the German Development Institute, Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C., USA and the Indian National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.

Dr M. Sheharyar Khan is Assistant Professor at the Social Sciences Department, Iqra University, Islamabad, Pakistan where he teaches courses on International Terrorism and Security Studies. Dr Khan's research focus is on non-state violent actors, counterterrorism, radicalisation, security studies and non-traditional security threats. He has produced over 20 research papers in peer reviewed journals and has presented papers in several international conferences.

Dr Naeem Ahmed is an Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, Pakistan. Dr Ahmed is a recipient of the Fernand Braudel IFER-Incoming Post-Doc Fellow at the Foundation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (FMSH), Paris, France. His field of research is domestic and regional security of South Asia with particular focus on religious extremism and terrorism, nuclear issues, and Kashmir.

Dr Najamudin Ayoola teaches at the Centre for International Peace and Stability at the National University of Sciences & Technology in Islamabad, Pakistan. Dr Ayoola did his PhD in Politics and

International Relations from the International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan. His areas of interest are the European Union, regionalism and globalisation. He has extensively written on issues affecting European Muslims.

Dr Sarwat Rauf is Assistant Professor in the Department of International Relations at the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan. She earned her MSc, MPhil and PhD degrees from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan. She has been a Visiting Research Fellow (2013) at the Cambridge Central Asia Forum, Cambridge University, UK.

Dr Wang Shida is Deputy Director at Institute of South & Southeast Asian & Oceanic Studies, China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, Beijing, China. Dr Shida earned his doctorate in International Relations from China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations; Masters in Law from China Foreign Affairs University, Beijing, China. His areas of expertise are South Asian studies and radical Islam. His latest books include *The Research on Belt and Road Initiative*; and *The Terrorism Situation and Regional Security in Central and South Asia*. He is a Visiting Scholar at New York University, USA. ■

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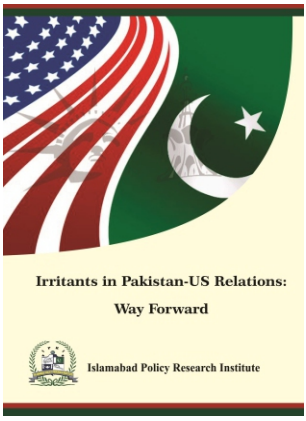

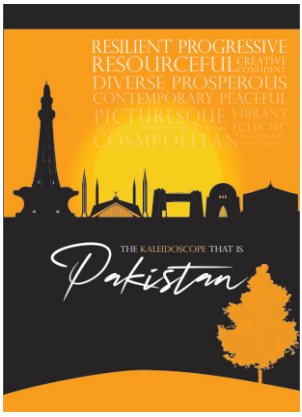

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40. *The State of Migration and Multiculturalism in Pakistan* (2003)

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Through the *IPRI Paper (Monograph Series),* Research Fellows and other experts contribute on a broad range of critical contemporary issues facing Pakistan and the international community. These monographs are self-contained single-volume works contribute to ongoing scholarship in a particular discipline by offering original insight into their subjects, explore complex foreign policy, geoeconomic and geopolitical issues, present the latest data, analysis, and propose practical policy recommendations. Some of the monographs published to date include:

- IPRI Paper 19, *India's Defence Budget and Armed Forces Modernisation: An Analysis* – Sobia Saeed Paracha (2017)
- IPRI Paper 18, *Management of Pakistan-India Relations: Resolution of Disputes* – Dr Noor ul Haq (2017)
- IPRI Paper 17, *Challenge of Identity and Governance Quaid's Vision: The Way Forward* – Dr Noor ul Haq (2013)
- IPRI Paper 16, *Bharat Mein Mazhabi Janoon Ka Zafrani Rukh* – Asghar Ali Shad (2012)
- IPRI Paper 15, *Genesis and Growth of Naxalite Movement in India* – Asghar Ali Shad [*Trnsl* Mushir Anwar] (2011)
- IPRI Paper 14, *Naxal Tehreek: Ibtida aur Farogh* – Asghar Ali Shad (2011)
- IPRI Paper 13, *China's Peaceful Rise and South Asia*

– Dr Maqbool Ahmad Bhatty (2008)

- IPRI Paper 12, *The Ummah and Global Challenges: Re-organising the OIC* – Dr Muhammad Ahsan (2006)
- IPRI Paper 11, *Pakistan's Vision East Asia: Pursuing Economic Diplomacy in the Age of Globalisation in East Asia and Beyond* – Dr Ahmad Rashid Malik (2006)
- IPRI Paper 10, *Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan* – Dr Noor ul Haq, Dr Rashid Ahmed Khan and Dr Maqsudul Hasan Nuri (2005)
- IPRI Paper 9, *India-Pakistan Nuclear Rivalry: Perceptions, Misperceptions, and Mutual Deterrence* – Dr Zulfqar Khan (2005)
- IPRI Paper 8, *An Evaluation of Pre-emption in Iraq* – Ahmed Ijaz Malik (2004)
- IPRI Paper 7, *Rise of Extremism in South Asia* – Sadia Nasir (2004)
- IPRI Paper 6, *Ballistic Missile Defence-China and South Asia* – Dr Maqbool A. Bhatty (2003)
- IPRI Paper 5, *Pakistan and the New Great Game* - Asma Shakir Khawaja (2003)
- IPRI Paper 4, *Nuclear Risk Reduction in South Asia* – Dr Abdul Majid, Lieutenant General (R) Kamal Matinuddin, Dr Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema and Mazhar Hussain Shah (2002)
- IPRI Paper 3, *Pak-U.S. Strategic Dialogue* (2002)
- IPRI Paper 2, *Bharat Mein Intehapasand Hindu Nazriyat ka Farogh* – Asghar Ali Shad (2001)
- IPRI Paper 1, *Terrorism* – Rafiuddin Ahmed with Fasahat H. Syed, Zafar N. Jaspal, Ahmed Ijaz Malik, Faisal S. Cheema and Huma A. Shah (2001).

Research and Policy Insight Series

In 2019, the Institute initiated a new series called the *Research and Policy Insight Series*. The purpose of this Series is to provide concise overview of an important security, international affairs or political economy issue, persuasive policy directions and recommendations on the best course forward. The Series, therefore, hopes to act as a decision-making tool and a call to action for non-specialist audiences such as policy leaders and change agents who are interested in studying, formulating or influencing policy. Drawing on rich evidence and practical experiences, the Series will harness diverse perspectives, both from within and outside the Institute. While all geographic regions are vital, the main focus of the papers will be on Pakistan and South Asia so that new policy ideas and proposals are generated by opinion leaders and 'evidence accurate beliefs' created among those who may not have yet decided where their opinions lie on an issue.

- Fayyaz Ali Khan, *FATA Mainstreaming: Way Forward* (2019)

The Kaleidoscope that is Pakistan

In 2019, IPRI launched the Margalla Dialogue. Under this flagship Track 1.5 initiative, IPRI started an open call for essays, thought-pieces, opinion articles and policy perspectives from eminent and dynamic scholars at all levels for publication in a book. The idea is to select, acknowledge and publish innovative ideas that challenge traditional disciplinary boundaries and provocatively revisit conventional themes like Diplomacy, International Relations, Political Science, Security, and Governance, with a particular focus on Pakistan and Pakistanis:

1. *The Kaleidoscope that is Pakistan* (2019)

***Note**: All IPRI publications are available for free download online.*

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