

# THE CHANGING PARAMETERS OF PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

*Ambassador (Retired) Munir Akram\**

## **Abstract**

*The basic direction of Pakistan's foreign and security policy during the last seven decades was set at the country's creation. Confronted with an existential threat from India, and with a geopolitical location on the fault lines of the US-Soviet Cold War, Pakistan walked almost inexorably into the American camp. China is the main strategic rationale for US hostility towards Pakistan and partnership with India. Pakistan's security and foreign policy must also address the monumental global challenges which the humanity faces today and which impact directly on Pakistan: poverty and hunger, climate change and the water crisis, international migration, nuclear conflict, terrorism and growing injustice and inequality, among and within nations. Addressing these challenges requires much greater and more intense regional and international cooperation. Pakistan must remain at the forefront of endeavours to promote such cooperation and create a world where peace, security and prosperity are universal.*

**Keywords:** Cold War, Bipolar, Emerging, US, Pakistan, India, Strategic Partnership, China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), BRI Global, Regional.

## **Introduction and Context**

**T**here were some early disappointments from Pakistan's foreign policy – the US support to India after the Sino-US border conflict<sup>1</sup>; and the US arms embargo during the 1965 India-Pakistan war. The failure of the alliance to prevent Pakistan's break up in 1971 reinforced Islamabad's closeness with a still isolated China and,

---

\*Ambassador (Retired) Munir Akram has a distinguished diplomatic career of 40 years. He served two terms as President of the UN Security Council as a Permanent Representative to the UN. Ambassador Akram has represented Pakistan in numerous UN bodies and international conferences, including the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Conference on Disarmament. He has written and negotiated a nuclear treaty with India. He is a prolific writer and has lectured widely on various strategic, political and economic issues. World leaders, friend and foe alike, hold him in great admiration for his honesty, competence and negotiation skills. He also has been viewed as one of the more colourful players in the world foreign policy arena. Present US Security Advisor John Bolton and the then US Ambassador to the UN (2005-2006), described him in his book 'Surrender is not an Option' as "Munir Akram, the smooth-as-silk Pakistani Ambassador." The authors' email address is akram\_munir@yahoo.com.

after India's "peaceful" nuclear explosion of 1974, a determination to develop nuclear weapons capability to deter India.

After several years of nuclear friction, Pakistan was drawn back into America's anti-Soviet campaign in Afghanistan. This too ended in acrimony over revived US nuclear sanctions after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Each of the twists and turns in the Pakistan-US relationship, and the consequent impact on Pakistan's national circumstances, were the result of global developments that influenced shifts in US policies and priorities. After the end of the Cold War, the Pakistan-US relationship moved from a convergence of strategic interests to progressive divergence. Pakistan charted an "independent" course, visible in its closeness to Afghan and Kashmiri militant groups and the decision to conduct the nuclear explosions in May 1998, following the Indian tests.

Like the world, Pakistanis were shocked by the destruction wrought by Al Qaeda on 9/11. But popular opinion in Pakistan was opposed to the US invasion of Afghanistan and ouster of the Taliban even if the Musharaf Government was obliged to accept and support this war. After Pakistani troops entered South Waziristan to put down the Taliban related Mahsud uprising, and the Red Mosque had to be cleared of violent extremists, anti-government Pakistani groups plus Al Qaeda and its Uzbek, Turkmen and Uighur associates joined to form the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Very soon as subsequent events illustrated-elements of the TTP were coopted by Afghan and Indian intelligence.

Meanwhile, even as Pakistan fought formerly sympathetic militants, India forged a close relationship with the US. It normalized relations with Israel, dumped its pro-Arab "non-aligned" stance, and, most importantly, signaled its willingness to join the US in challenging China's rising power in Asia. The US sealed its strategic embrace of India with the 2005 signature of defense and civilian nuclear cooperation agreements. Similar treatment was denied to Pakistan. US policies towards India and Pakistan were formally "de-hyphenated".

In the post Musharraf years, Washington sought Pakistan's continued collaboration through "transactional" incentives linked to its cooperation against terrorism. It helped Washington to have leaders in Islamabad who were financially and personally vulnerable to US pressure. While offering support on counter terrorism, in exchange for cooperation on Afghanistan, the US continued to deny Pakistan any weapons systems or technologies which could be used to balance its military position vis-a-vis India and it persisted in efforts to constrain Pakistan's

nuclear and missile programs and end any support for the Kashmiri freedom struggle.

The stark reality is that Pakistan is now considered an adversary, not so much by President Trump, who does not have a strategic compass, but by the US “establishment”. This hostility is the consequence of several factors: America’s strategic partnership with India to contain China; the blame assigned to Pakistan for the US military failure in Afghanistan; the atavistic opposition to Pakistan’s strategic capabilities; and the considerable and growing influence of the expatriate Indian-American community which is aligned now with the powerful Israeli lobby.

US hostility is tempered for the moment because Washington needs Pakistan’s help to negotiate a political settlement that enables an honorable withdrawal from Afghanistan. Once Pakistan has served this purpose, the US is quite likely to deploy all possible means to secure Pakistan’s adherence to its (announced) South Asia strategy (basically, a Pax Indo-Americana).

Pakistan will need to create the strategic space to maintain a friction-free relationship with the US in future. Apart from mobilizing its national strength and the support of regional friends to enhance its diplomatic leverage, other areas of potential cooperation with the US need to be promoted: trade and investment, arms control and counter terrorism.

## **The Emerging Asian Super Power**

China is the main (although not only) strategic rationale for US hostility towards Pakistan (and partnership with India).

The Ancient Greek historian, Thucydides, after observing the Peloponnesian wars, concluded that when an established power is faced by a rising power, a conflict is inevitable. Dr Henry Kissinger reviewed twenty such confrontations in history, and found that seventeen had resulted in conflict. It would appear that the US, today’s established power, has stepped firmly into the “**Thucydides Trap**” to confront China, the rising power.

In a speech last September, US Vice President Pence accused China of: unfair trade, technology theft, targeted tariffs against the US, interference in the US electoral process, a military buildup, militarization of the South China Sea islands claimed by China, debt diplomacy (under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)), anti-

US propaganda and internal repression. This speech was preceded by official US policy papers describing China (and Russia) as America's adversaries and the imposition of unilateral trade tariffs and restrictions against China, sanctions against Chinese military entities, renewed weapons sales to Taiwan and expansion of the so-called "Freedom of Navigation" operations in the South China Sea.

Since Pence's speech, the US has mounted a major media campaign denouncing China's treatment of Uighur Muslims, halted most technology cooperation, restricted Huawei, the Chinese telephone giant, in the US and sought the arrest of its Chief Financial Officer (and daughter of its founder).

There appears to be hope that the high level Sino-US negotiations underway to address the several trade issues will yield an agreement which may be adopted at a Trump-Xi Summit in April 2017. This may help to revive more robust growth in the world economy.

However, a trade agreement is unlikely to lead to a more cooperative Sino-US strategic relationship. The present Republican Administration appears unable to accept another "equal" power. On the other hand, an increasingly confident China does not seem prepared any longer to "hide its strength and bide its time". President Xi Jinping, while desiring shared progress for "humanity", has declared that it is China's time to shine, China will "reach its dreams" and it will not yield "one inch" of its territory.

Although China has largely played "defense" in the current "trade war" with the US, it will not accept concessions that would adversely impact on its core interests: its territorial integrity, domestic stability and continued development. Despite America's greater power, China enjoys several advantages in a global contest. While the US remains entangled in multiple crises North Korea, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, Libya and is simultaneously confronting Russia in Europe, Ukraine, even Venezuela, China is quietly extending and expanding its influence and power.

It has formed a "strategic partnership" with a resurgent Russia. Between them, China and Russia control the Eurasian "heartland" and are major players across its periphery Southern Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, the Indian and Pacific Oceans and North East Asia.

One hundred and twenty eight countries have joined the BRI. The rail connection between China and Europe is open and expanding. China plus seventeen European countries have formed a group to promote infrastructure investment and business collaboration. Italy has endorsed the BRI. Germany, France and UK have entered into multiple business ventures. China is the main trade and investment partner of most Asian and African nations and even of several Latin American countries.

US proposals to counter China's economic drive appear puny and unimpressive. Washington has created a \$ 60 billion fund for investment in developing countries infrastructure - as compared to over \$ 1 Trillion which China will spend.

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the initial part (the "flagship") of Xi Jinping's BRI. So far, projects worth around \$ 27 billion, of the \$ 72 billion committed, have been implemented, which is encouraging progress. Chinese official loans at 2% interest do not create a "debt trap". Pakistan's \$ 100 billion debt burden, which consumes over 30% of its national revenues, is almost entirely owed to Western lenders. This Western debt, unlike Chinese CPEC and other financing, has not created very many productive capacities in Pakistan. The infrastructure installed under CPEC will create the physical foundation for Pakistan's growth and, in its next phase, rapid industrialization.

Given the economic promise and potential of the Pakistan-China relationship, the extensive and long standing strategic cooperation between the two neighbours, India's enduring enmity, and America's visible hostility, only a fool would propose that Pakistan's do anything other than what Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, S.K. Dehlavi, presciently advised in 1962: "tie itself with hoops of steel" to China.

To preserve and build on the traditional relationship of mutual trust and understanding, Pakistan must correctly evaluate a rising China's more diverse and complex national, regional and global interests and objectives.

In the years after the Sino-Indian border war, the equation in South Asia was simple. China supported Pakistan militarily and politically to resist Indian domination. India's military power was almost wholly deployed against Pakistan and thus entirely "neutralized" as far as China was concerned. Today, India and China have reinforced their military deployments and logistics against each other,

and both are building naval power in the Indian Ocean. But at least 65% of Indian land, air and sea assets continue to be arrayed against Pakistan, significantly diminishing India's capacity to confront China.

However, China's policy objective is to avoid rather than frontally confront the Indian threat. China is now India's largest trading partner and a major investor in the Indian economy. Beijing hopes that India will see the benefits of mutual cooperation and the cost of confrontation. This was the message President Xi conveyed to Prime Minister Modi in two bilateral Summit meetings last year. Russia too is pressing India to accept the "Asian order" rather than serve as America's cats paw.

To succeed in this diplomatic seduction of India, Beijing is obliged to adopt public postures on South Asian issues which may appear to Pakistanis as not being as robust as in the past. And China may even hold back from providing Pakistan some advanced weapons that it fears may push India further towards a military alliance with the US.

China's success in persuading India to join the Asian structures of cooperation (under the SCO, the BRI, an Asian trade arrangement), and spurn a military alliance with the US, could serve Pakistan's interests if this makes New Delhi more amenable to an equitable and normal relationship with Pakistan.

However, it is uncertain if Chinese (and Russian) diplomacy will succeed in holding back India from a full-fledged alliance with the US. Indian chauvinism and great power ambitions, especially under Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) – Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) rule, may trump the vision of a cooperative Eurasian and world order. The signals from hyper-nationalist Hindu India are not propitious.

Thus, Pakistan, and China, would be well advised to presume that eventually India will opt to compete as China's rival rather than cooperate as its Asian partner. Beijing and Islamabad must formulate their strategic policies accordingly.

## **Pakistan and India**

The tense relationship between Pakistan and India is the reflection of a thousand years of joint but hostile coexistence between the two peoples. The Muslims and Hindus of the sub-continent may have developed, over the centuries,

a large measure of ethnic fusion through intermarriages and conversions, but the two communities, despite periodic efforts at constructing a common culture, and collective political positions against external communities and powers, such as the British, always retained a sense of their religious, historical, cultural and even ethnic differentness and separateness. This reality of a common habitat but separate identities was the fundamental rationale for the partition of British India and the creation of Pakistan.

The creation of two geographically separate states could have helped to build cooperation between them utilizing the areas of cultural, ethnic and historical commonalities. But it did not help that the steps towards the political separation were marked by the bloodletting of the religious “riots” and intensified into wholesale massacres during the process of emergence of Pakistan. Or that the Indians made every effort in the process of separation to ensure that Pakistan was stillborn. In the minds of the Muslims, these events consolidated their conviction that partition and the creation of a homeland for themselves was the right decision. The experience of independence and the emergence of the two states deepened and gave a tangible identity to the hostility between the two peoples.

In their hour of triumph of realizing the dream of Pakistan, and to stem the bloodletting on both sides, it was obviously essential for the new Nation’s leaders, especially its founding father, to affirm that Pakistan would adhere to the principles of religious tolerance and equal democratic rights for all its citizens. Yet, while Gandhi and Nehru proclaimed that India would be a secular state, there was no confusion in anyone’s mind that Pakistan was a “Muslim homeland”. It is ironic, therefore, that the BJP-RSS ideologies are now “reverse engineering” India’s identity as a Hindu Rashtra (State), reconfirming in retrospect the basic rationale for the creation of Pakistan.

Today, most people ascribe the hostile relations between Pakistan and India to the Kashmir dispute. But this intense dispute is merely the most vivid illustration of the Muslim-Hindu division, mistrust and hostility rather than the cause of this hostility. Contrary to the common dispensation, even if the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir were resolved in the near future, the sense of separateness and rivalry, if not hostility, would still persist between the two states. This is not to diminish the imperative need to resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute; it is to place it in the proper historic perspective.

A resolution of this dispute is vital now for several reasons: to fulfill the commitments made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir; to prevent the massive human rights violations being committed against the Kashmiri people, and to avoid the danger of a nuclear Armageddon. The rights and wrongs of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute are no longer in any doubt. The people of the divided state were promised the exercise of the right to self-determination by the UN Security Council and by India and Pakistan. After several years of protracted efforts by the international community to enable the Kashmiris to express their wishes to join India or Pakistan through a plebiscite, and years of Indian obfuscation and delay, the Indian Government declared in the mid-fifties that it was no longer bound by its previous solemn and legal commitments.

Periodic Kashmiri revolts and Pakistan-India conflicts are the consequence of the stalemate created by India's retraction of its solemn and binding commitments. The last major Kashmiri struggle for freedom lasted an entire decade: 1990-2000. India attempted to suppress the Kashmiris through brute force. Pakistan made little effort to disguise its support for Kashmir insurgents, especially religious groups with battle hardened fighters who had recently returned from the anti-Soviet campaign in Afghanistan. Despite deploying over 700,000 troops in occupied Kashmir, India's security forces were unable to put down the Kashmiri struggle, until India's intelligence agencies infiltrated some of the militant groups and commissioned a series of terrorist atrocities against foreigners and civilians which were wrongfully ascribed to the Kashmiri insurgents. Progressively, with growing US support, India succeeded in equating the Kashmiri insurgents with Arab terror groups, such as the then nascent Al Qaeda, and the "jihadis" who had returned from Afghanistan to create havoc in their Middle East and North African home countries.

When Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) elements attempted to assassinate President Musharraf, Islamabad outlawed the organization and agreed to put it on the Security Council's terrorism list. Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) was also "listed" (with the agreement of the PPP government) for its alleged involvement in 2008 Mumbai attacks. Since then, the JeM has been accused by India of carrying out several attacks against Indian military targets (Uri and more recently Pulwama), which have led to bouts of Pakistan-India crises. However, for all intents and purposes, due to Indian counter insurgency measures and Pakistan's restraints, external aid to the Kashmiri freedom movement is non-existent and it is indigenously developed by the people of Indian Occupied Kashmir. Over the same time, India has enlarged and intensified its sponsorship of Baluch insurgent groups



and TTP terrorism from the territory of Afghanistan as well as Iran. Pakistan has been restrained by the American presence in Afghanistan and its sensitive relationship with Iran from retaliating against this Indian sponsored terrorism from the West. This equation could change once the US withdraws from Afghanistan and Iran cooperates to end cross border terrorism.

To everyone's surprise, inspite of India's extreme repressive actions and with its deployment of 0.7 million force, is unable to suppress the freedom struggle in Kashmir. Inspired by indigenous and youthful Kashmiri freedom fighters, a simmering insurgency caught political fire when Indian forces killed the popular young freedom fighter, Burhanuddin Wani, in 2014. Since then, Kashmir has been gripped by an overt popular movement daily demanding freedom (Azadi) from Indian rule. The brutal and politically clumsy response of India's BJP Government has managed to alienate virtually all Kashmiri Muslims, even those Kashmiri political parties which had collaborated with New Delhi in the past.

Kashmir is vital part of Pakistan for multiple reasons. It was meant to join Pakistan under the rationale of partition. The K in Pakistan's name stands for Kashmir. It's people identify with Pakistan (and reject India). It is geographically contiguous to Pakistan and the source of Pakistan's rivers.

It is now clear that India will not be able to suppress the Kashmiri demand for freedom (Azadi) by its brutal tactics. Continuing Indian oppression will motivate Kashmiris from Azad Kashmir and Pakistani sympathizers to go to the aid of the unarmed Kashmiris. India will, in any event, blame Pakistan for sponsoring "terrorism" and threaten military action. A wider conflict was fortunately avoided after Pulwama, only due to Pakistani restraint. Next time, the restraint may break down. A general Pakistan-India war could cross the nuclear threshold, because Indian attempts to dominate escalation and its brinkmanship may fail.

While it is in Pakistan's interest to dismantle religious extremist groups, which expose it to US sponsored "sanctions", must not act against the pro-Kashmiri groups so long as India continues with its oppression in occupied Kashmir. A just settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is essential to end the tragic and unacceptable suffering of the people of occupied Kashmir and to eliminate the threat of a catastrophic war in the region.

India is unlikely to agree to the UN plebiscite in the foreseeable future. Pakistan would commit a strategic error if it formally accepts the status quo. The

formula negotiated during the Musharaf period would have been unworkable even if India had accepted it. Joint administration of Jammu and Kashmir would negate Kashmiri self-determination forever and legalize India's forcible occupation of Jammu and Kashmir. It would provide India the legal status to complicate Pakistan's administration of Gilgit Baltistan and access to China across the Karakoram Highway, thus jeopardizing the entire CPEC project.

Given the intractable nature of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, for the present, it would be perhaps best to aim for an interim settlement that does not ask any of the three parties: Pakistan, India and the Kashmiris, to concede their long held political positions. Such an interim settlement could comprise separate but synchronized steps by India, Pakistan and Kashmiris.

India would have to end its military repression, allow the Kashmiris to exercise their democratic rights, including freedom of speech and association, withdraw its security forces from Kashmiri towns and cities and fully implement, in letter and spirit, the provisions of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution. Pakistan, for its part, would proscribe all groups advocating violence as a means to promote Kashmiri freedom, undertake verifiable measures to prevent illegal cross LoC/ border movement by such freedom fighters, and encourage indigenous Kashmiri groups and political parties in occupied Kashmir to engage in reciprocal process with occupying government agencies to eschew violence and create conditions for a United Nation's sponsored plebiscite.

If this interim arrangement leads to an extended peace between Pakistan and India and the development of trade, investment and other forms of cooperation, it is possible that a more permanent settlement based on the wishes of the Kashmiri people may become possible in future. However, stable security between Pakistan and India will also require an agreement or mutual understanding on conventional, nuclear and missile arms control. India's ambitious acquisition of advanced conventional offensive weapons systems has progressively increased Pakistan's reliance on nuclear deterrence, including development of suitable delivery system to maintain strategic balance. India's provocative doctrines of limited war under nuclear overhang are eroding the stability of mutual deterrence.

The recent Pulwama crisis again illustrated the dangers inherent in the current weapons configurations and postures of both powers. India, and the US, should have recognized by now that Pakistan will not be cowed down in a

confrontation. Further acceleration of the divergent strategic postures and capabilities of the two sides could lead to even more dangerous strategic planning - to prevail in a conflict through preemptive strikes and second strike capabilities. Yet, all realistic projections of an India - Pakistan war point to the virtual certainty of "mutual assured destruction". This should motivate both nations and the major powers to initiate an urgent process of nuclear and conventional arms control process between Pakistan and India. Pakistan had proposed a "mutual restraint regime" immediately after the nuclear tests of 1998. This proposal deserves urgent and positive reconsideration.

## **Afghanistan**

All that divides the peoples of Pakistan and India- religion, culture, history- should unite the peoples of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Unfortunately, Kabul's reactive rejection of the Durand Line as the international border set the Pakistan-Afghan relationship on a negative trajectory. This was exacerbated by the super power competition within Afghanistan, King Zahir Shah's ouster by Prince Daud, the resurrection of the Pashtunistan issue, communist coups, the Soviet invasion and India's influence on Afghan thinking.

The period of the anti-Soviet "jihad" was, ironically, the best years in the Pakistan-Afghan relationship. Pakistan opened its borders to a flood of three million Afghans fleeing the Soviet and communist military occupation. Almost all of Afghanistan's elite inhabited Peshawar and Islamabad (until some of them found refuge in the US and Europe). Despite the ongoing war, the economies of Pakistan and Afghanistan became highly integrated. Pakistan served as the base and the launching pad of the Afghan Mujahideen's jihad against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

The nature of the relationship changed after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Most of the Mujahideen groups remained dependent on Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, while some, like Ahmed Shah Masood, the Hazaras and Shia groups, turned to Iran. Pakistan's influence grew further after Mullah Umar's Taliban gained power over most of Afghanistan.

But with return of Osama bin Laden (OBL) to Afghanistan, the emergence of Al Qaeda and aggregation there of multiple Islamic militant groups, the potential for diplomatic damage to Pakistan from its Taliban association was writ large. Early Pakistani-Saudi efforts to have the Taliban hand over or eject OBL were

unsuccessful. The incident of 'Black Tuesday', and Mullah Omar's persistent refusal to surrender Osama, imposed the difficult choice on Pakistan to abandon the Taliban, cooperate with the US invasion of Afghanistan and accept the rule of a hostile Northern Alliance in Kabul.

The American adventure in Afghanistan was destined for failure from inception. Pakistan's military leaders at the time told the US frankly that it would be folly to replace a regime representing the majority Pashtuns by one controlled by the Tajik minority. American hubris ignored this advice. A symbolic Pashtun, Hamid Karzai, was emplaced as the figure-head President (although he accumulated considerable power over the years). The resurgence of the Taliban/Pashtun insurgency was inevitable.

It has taken the US over seventeen years to recognize, as the Soviets did thirty years before them, and the British a hundred years earlier, that defeating an Afghan insurgency is an almost impossible enterprise. Refusing to admit their strategic and tactical mistakes, the US military sought, from the outset, to transfer blame for almost every failure on to Pakistan. Even as the US accepted the inevitability of direct talks with the Taliban, it insisted that Pakistan accept the responsibility for "bringing them to the table".

As noted, the outcome of the US-Taliban talks is uncertain. These could lead to a comprehensive agreement between the US, the Taliban and the other Afghan parties, including the Ghani government. Or the Afghans may not be able to agree on a future structure of governance, and the US may withdraw after an agreement with the Taliban, leaving behind a continuing civil war and an eventual Taliban victory. Or there may be no agreement at all and the US may decide either to withdraw unilaterally or to stay on in a few embattled garrisons in Afghanistan.

Pakistan must be prepared for all possible scenarios. If peace returns to Afghanistan, and a friendly government is installed in Kabul, Pakistan could seek to promote the integration of the two economies and implementation of the several connectivity projects, including CPEC's extension to Afghanistan. If there is no agreement, or partial agreement, Pakistan, at a minimum, should ensure, through action by the Taliban or itself, the elimination from Afghan territory of the TTP and the Baluch groups being used by India for terrorist attacks against Pakistan and the marginalization of India's political influence in Afghanistan. In the event that the Afghan civil war continues, Pakistan should insulate itself from its consequences by

completing the fencing and monitoring of the border and securing the earliest possible repatriation of the Afghan refugees.

Last, but not least, as suggested above, Pakistan should explore how it can create a stake for the US to maintain some measure of cooperation with Pakistan post its withdrawal from Afghanistan e.g. through incentives for US investment and trade, including in CPEC projects, regional arms control and counter terrorism cooperation.

## **Economic Objectives**

As China's leader, Deng Xiaoping, remarked when launching his economic reforms: "Development is the only truth. If we don't develop, we will be bullied". Today, China cannot be bullied. Pakistan has vast economic potential in almost every sector- agriculture, manufacturing, mining, energy, tourism, exports. Yet, Pakistan's economy has grossly underperformed due to mismanagement and inefficiency. Growth in Pakistan's economy can be unlocked by good governance, policy clarity, financial stability and the conscious mobilization of domestic and foreign investment.

Ultimately, for Pakistan, as for other developing countries, investment is the key to growth. The modest rate of Pakistan's economic growth can be easily doubled if Pakistan can attract large investment flows. There are immense and unexploited opportunities for productive and profitable investment in Pakistan.

The investments announced by China under CPEC and by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and other friendly countries recently are an encouraging start and must be diligently consummated. Active efforts should be made to tap other investment sources, including private investment from the US, Europe, Japan, ASEAN and other established sources of capital including sovereign wealth funds, pension funds and private equity funds.

## **Global Challenges**

Pakistan's security and foreign policy must also address the monumental global challenges that humanity faces today and which directly impacts Pakistan: poverty and hunger, climate change and the water crisis, international migration, nuclear conflict, terrorism and growing injustice and inequality, among and within nations. Addressing these challenges requires much greater and more intense regional and international cooperation. Pakistan must remain at the forefront of

endeavours to promote such cooperation and create a world where peace, security and prosperity are universal.

## NOTES

---

<sup>1</sup> The Sino-Indian War, also known as the Indo-China War and Sino-Indian Border Conflict, was a war between China and India that occurred in 1962. A disputed Himalayan border was the main pretext for war, but other issues played a role. There had been a series of violent border incidents after the 1959 Tibetan uprising, when India had granted asylum to the Dalai Lama. India initiated a forward policy in which it placed outposts along the border, including several north of the McMahon Line, the eastern portion of the Line of Actual Control proclaimed by Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1959. Unable to reach political accommodation on disputed territory along the 3,225 kilometers (2000 mile) long Himalayan border, the Chinese launched simultaneous offensives in Ladakh and across the McMahon Line on 20 October 1962. Chinese troops advanced over Indian forces in both theatres, capturing Rezang La in Chushul in the western theatre, as well as Tawang in the eastern theatre. The war ended when China declared a ceasefire on 20 November 1962, and simultaneously announced its withdrawal to its claimed 'line of actual control'. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sino-Indian\\_War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sino-Indian_War)