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**Report of Policy Lab on  
Bridging Gaps in  
National Security Policies and their  
Implementation in Pakistan**

پاکستان میں قومی سلامتی کی پالیسیوں  
کے اطلاق میں حائل رکاوٹوں کا خاتمہ

**Policy Analysis &  
Recommendations- Part-5 of 11  
Pakistan's Geo-Political &  
Military Security**

**Reviewing the strategic defense  
framework, modernization efforts  
and geopolitical considerations.**

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتّٰی يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

(سورة الرعد 13:11)

بے شک، اللہ کسی قوم کی حالت نہیں بدلتا جب تک وہ خود اپنی حالت کو نہ بدلے۔

Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people  
until they change what is in themselves.

(Surah Ar-Ra'd 13:11)

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ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي  
النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

(سورة الروم 30:41)

خشکی اور تری میں فساد ظاہر ہو گیا ہے، لوگوں کے اپنے ہاتھوں کے کیے ہوئے اعمال کی وجہ

سے، تاکہ اللہ انہیں ان کے کچھ اعمال کا مزہ چکھائے، شاید کہ وہ باز آجائیں۔

Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of  
what the hands of people have earned, so that  
He may let them taste part of what they have done,  
that perhaps they will return (to righteousness).

(Surah Ar-Rum 30:41)

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# **Pakistan's Geopolitical & Military Security**

**Reviewing the strategic defense framework,  
modernization efforts, and geopolitical  
considerations**

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## Preface

Public policy formulation and implementation are dynamic processes that require a comprehensive understanding of national security in all its dimensions. To equip policymakers, practitioners, and scholars with the necessary analytical tools to assess and refine policy strategies, a **Policy Simulation Lab on Analyzing & Evaluating Implementation Strategies for Pakistan's National Security Dimensions** was conceptualized, designed, and mentored by **Dr. Muqem Islam Soharwardy** in **November 2023**.

This **Policy simulation Lab** was a unique initiative aimed at critically assessing the effectiveness of policy implementation strategies across multiple domains of national security. It provided a structured environment where participants engaged in high-level problem-solving, scenario planning, and decision-making to address contemporary security challenges. The exercise was framed around a holistic approach to national security, moving beyond traditional defense mechanisms to include economic, environmental, cyber, and cultural security considerations.

The report of **Policy simulation Lab** presents the findings and recommendations of **nine Task Forces**, each dedicated to evaluating implementation strategies for a specific security dimension. These include:

1. **Energy Security** – Examining sustainable and resilient energy policies to ensure national energy independence and efficiency.
2. **Economic Security** – Identifying strategies to strengthen Pakistan's economic resilience, trade policies, and financial stability.
3. **Social Security** – Addressing social protection mechanisms, inequality, and welfare policies to promote social cohesion.
4. **Environmental Security** – Evaluating environmental policies to mitigate climate risks, resource depletion, and ecological threats.
5. **Military Security** – Reviewing the strategic defense framework, modernization efforts, and geopolitical considerations.
6. **Cybersecurity** – Assessing cybersecurity threats, digital infrastructure protection, and cyber policy frameworks.
7. **Health Security** – Developing robust public health policies to counter emerging health crises and pandemics.
8. **Food Security** – Ensuring sustainable agricultural policies, food distribution, and supply chain resilience.
9. **Cultural Security** – Analyzing policies to protect national identity, cultural heritage, and counter ideological extremism.

Each task force conducted an in-depth examination of current policy frameworks, identified key challenges, and proposed actionable strategies to enhance national security implementation. The insights gained from this simulation exercise offer valuable contributions to policy discourse and serve as a strategic guide for decision-makers.

This report is a testament to the collaborative efforts of participants, researchers, and policymakers who engaged in this exercise with commitment and intellectual rigor. It is our hope that the findings herein will serve as a valuable resource for shaping Pakistan's future national security policies in an increasingly complex global landscape.

It is hoped that this document will serve as a significant milestone in the design, implementation, and facilitation of policies, paving the way for broader economic and industrial transformation in Pakistan, انشاء الله .

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*December 15, 2023*

## Executive Summary

### Context and Overview

The Pakistan National Security Policy (NSP) 2022-2026 outlines a comprehensive approach to national security, focusing on military, economic, and political stability. With its strategic geographic location and complex regional dynamics, Pakistan faces significant security challenges. The NSP integrates traditional and non-traditional security concerns, positioning economic security as a central pillar of national defense. While military strategy remains fundamental, the document emphasizes a holistic approach to addressing both internal and external threats while fostering stability and growth.

### Key Security Concerns

Pakistan's military strategy focuses on two primary objectives: safeguarding territorial borders and ensuring internal security. The rise of terrorism following the fall of Kabul in 2020 has reignited security concerns along Pakistan's borders, leading to heightened counterterrorism operations. Although significant progress has been made in controlling terrorist activity, the re-emergence of insurgency movements necessitates ongoing vigilance and military action. Additionally, political instability and economic challenges continue to exacerbate Pakistan's security environment, making it crucial for the country to adapt its security framework to these evolving threats.

### Defense Capabilities

Pakistan's military is among the top ten in the world according to the Global Firepower Index, with a robust defense infrastructure comprising the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The country maintains a powerful deterrent in the form of nuclear capabilities, with a policy of minimum deterrence aimed at preventing conflict with India. Conventional military assets, including tanks, fighter jets, submarines, and a growing missile program, complement Pakistan's strategic defense capabilities. Furthermore, Pakistan has invested in an indigenous defense industry, enabling it to produce a wide range of military equipment.

### Nuclear Deterrence and Conventional Forces

Pakistan's nuclear strategy plays a pivotal role in its defense posture. With an estimated 165-175 nuclear warheads, Pakistan maintains a policy of full-spectrum deterrence, ensuring it can respond to any form of aggression. The mutual vulnerability between India and Pakistan, despite disparities in conventional military strength, has led to a paradoxical stability-instability dynamic. This scenario complicates traditional warfare strategies but ensures that both nations are dissuaded from engaging in full-scale conflict due to the catastrophic potential of nuclear escalation.

### Internal and External Security Challenges

Pakistan's internal security is shaped by ongoing challenges, particularly the threat posed by insurgencies and terrorism. Along its western borders with Afghanistan, the

porous boundary presents a continuous challenge, with militant groups attempting to infiltrate and destabilize the region. On the eastern front, the long-standing rivalry with India remains a central concern. The unresolved Kashmir dispute has led to an arms race, with both nations seeking to outpace each other in military modernization. This competition extends to nuclear capabilities, where both countries maintain similar strategic doctrines, which results in a fragile equilibrium of deterrence.

Additionally, the geopolitical dynamics involving neighboring countries like China and Iran complicate Pakistan's strategic decisions. Pakistan's relationship with Iran remains strained due to mutual suspicions, particularly concerning insurgent groups operating along their shared border. The situation in Afghanistan further complicates Pakistan's defense strategy, as instability in the region could lead to a hostile or unfriendly regime on its western frontier, directly impacting its military security.

### **The Impact of Regional Dynamics**

Pakistan's military strategy is heavily influenced by its relationships with regional powers. India's Cold Start Doctrine, which advocates for pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan, remains a significant concern for Pakistan's military leadership. This doctrine has prompted Pakistan to reassess its warfighting strategy, ensuring it is prepared for various contingencies, including conventional and nuclear escalation.

The dynamics in Afghanistan, where Pakistan seeks strategic depth, are equally crucial. With ongoing instability and the rise of extremist groups, Pakistan must remain prepared to address both direct and indirect threats from across its western border. The fencing of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border has been an important step in securing the region, limiting cross-border insurgent activity.

Pakistan's national security environment is shaped by the complex dynamics of its relations with neighboring countries, particularly India and Afghanistan, as well as its engagement with global powers like the United States. The country faces a unique set of security challenges that include conventional and non-conventional threats from India, cross-border instability linked to Afghanistan, and internal volatility exacerbated by external factors. Addressing these multifaceted security issues requires a nuanced, strategic approach that balances military preparedness with socio-economic development.

### **Key Security Challenges:**

- **Conventional and Non-Conventional Threats from India:** Pakistan's military strategy is heavily influenced by its perennial security concerns regarding India, particularly the risk of both conventional warfare and non-conventional threats, including cross-border terrorism.
- **Instability from Afghanistan:** The ongoing instability in Afghanistan, aggravated by territorial disputes and poor diplomatic relations, poses significant regional security challenges for Pakistan. Afghanistan's internal conflicts and its relationship with Pakistan are further complicated by India's influence in the region.
- **Internal Security Threats:** Pakistan faces growing internal threats, including militancy and extremist movements that often have cross-border linkages, creating a volatile domestic situation.

## *Strategic Recommendations for Enhancing National Security*

### **1. Geo-Economic and Foreign Policy Strategies**

#### **1.1 CPEC for Economic Stabilization**

- Prioritize the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to enhance economic development, reduce disparities, and stabilize the national economy.
- Focus on key national interest projects such as railway connectivity.

#### **1.2 Regional Geo-Economic Connectivity**

- Realign Pakistan's foreign policy towards regional economic integration through organizations like the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).
- Strengthen economic ties with neighboring countries for mutual benefits.

#### **1.3 Engagement with New Geo-Economic Forums**

- Actively pursue membership in emerging geo-economic forums to enhance Pakistan's strategic position in the global economy.
- Collaborate with like-minded countries for economic and strategic gains.

#### **1.4 Management of Regional Strategic Constraints**

- Address cross-border threats through diplomacy, conflict resolution, trade connectivity, and confidence-building measures (CBMs).
- Enhance efforts for regional peace and stability.

#### **1.5 Strengthening Diplomatic Engagement and Dialogue with Afghanistan**

- Encourage Afghanistan to curb support for militant groups like the TTP.
- Establish bilateral mechanisms for addressing cross-border terrorism.

#### **1.6 International Cooperation Against Terrorism**

- Collaborate with international partners, including China and the US, to counter terrorism and transnational threats.
- Strengthen joint mechanisms to combat militant groups operating across borders.

### **2. Counter-Terrorism and Internal Security Measures**

#### **2.1 Specialized Teams for Unconventional Counter-Terrorism**

- Invest in counter-terrorism (CT) teams skilled in unconventional warfare and guerilla tactics.
- Modernize security forces' training to counter evolving threats.



## **2.2 Upgradation of Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)**

- Enhance LEAs' capabilities through advanced technologies like drones for border surveillance.
- Improve monitoring of militant activities and prevent cross-border infiltration.

## **2.3 Implementation of National Action Plan (NAP)**

- Prioritize Counter-Violent Extremism (CVE) and Counter-Financing of Terrorism (CFT) measures.
- Reform education and madrassa systems and engage media and religious scholars to counter extremist narratives.

## **2.4 Monitoring Cyberspace and Social Media**

- Work with social media platforms to curb militant propaganda.
- Block extremist media outlets such as "Umer Media" of TTP and "Al Azaim Foundation" of ISKP.

## **2.5 Dialogue and Engagement for Internal Stability**

- Foster dialogue with sub-nationalists and rights movement activists to promote reconciliation.
- Develop a counter-terrorism strategy in volatile areas like North and South Waziristan.

## **2.6 Weapon Clearance in Conflict Zones**

- Accelerate efforts to clear weapon in North and South Waziristan.
- Engage local communities in reporting heaving weapons and introduce a reward system.

## **2.7 Resolution of the Missing Persons Issue**

- Develop a transparent strategy to address missing persons cases, particularly those in Afghanistan.

# **3. Defense-Industrial Modernization and Military Enhancements**

## **3.1 Defense-Industrial Modernization & Indigenous Production**

- Develop a robust domestic defense industry to reduce reliance on foreign arms imports.
- Strengthen public-private partnerships for R&D in aerospace, naval, and cyber defense technologies.

### **3.2 Integrated Multi-Domain Warfare Capabilities**

- Establish a unified warfare doctrine integrating land, air, naval, cyber, and space capabilities.
- Improve interoperability among Pakistan Army, Air Force, and Navy through joint operations.

### **3.3 Strengthening Naval Power for Indo-Pacific Strategy**

- Upgrade Pakistan Navy's blue-water capabilities to counter regional maritime threats.
- Expand the submarine fleet with advanced stealth and nuclear-capable platforms.

### **3.4 Next-Generation Air Force & Aerospace Defense**

- Invest in 5th-generation fighter jets (e.g., advanced variants of JF-17 and stealth aircraft projects).
- Strengthen UAV (drone) programs for reconnaissance and combat.

### **3.5 Cyber and Space Warfare Capabilities**

- Establish a National Cyber Command to counter cyber threats.
- Develop offensive cyber capabilities and expand space surveillance programs.

### **3.6 Strategic Nuclear and Ballistic Missile Enhancements**

- Maintain credible nuclear deterrence through advanced missile technology.
- Strengthen sea-based nuclear deterrence through submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

### **3.7 Economic and Defense Budget Optimization**

- Shift focus to high-tech, precision warfare instead of large conventional forces.
- Leverage foreign direct investments (FDI) in defense technologies.

### **3.8 Strengthened Regional and Global Alliances**

- Deepen military alliances with China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Central Asia.
- Engage in joint military exercises to enhance combat readiness.

## **4. Institutional Reforms for Political Stability**

### **4.1 Electoral and Governance Reforms**

- Ensure free, fair, and transparent elections to reduce political polarization.
- Strengthen civil service neutrality and judiciary independence.

## **4.2 Inclusive National Dialogue & Conflict Resolution**

- Initiate a national dialogue between political parties, military leadership, civil society, and media.
- Establish a National Reconciliation Commission to mediate political conflicts.

## **4.3 Civil-Military Relations & Democratic Oversight**

- Define the constitutional role of the military in governance.
- Strengthen parliamentary oversight of defense and security policies.

## **4.4 Countering Regional Disintegration & Separatist Movements**

- Address grievances of marginalized regions (e.g., Balochistan, Sindh, ex-FATA) through equitable development.
- Strengthen economic integration with targeted investments.

## **4.5 National Security & Intelligence Reform for Internal Stability**

- Strengthen civilian-led counterterrorism and intelligence agencies.
- Improve coordination among police, intelligence agencies, and armed forces.

# **5. Economic and Social Policy for Stability**

## **5.1 Economic Stability & Social Equity**

- Implement pro-poor policies to address unemployment and inflation.
- Strengthen regional trade partnerships (e.g., China, Central Asia, Iran).

## **5.2 Media, Information Warfare & National Narrative Building**

- Regulate media ethics to prevent disinformation and foreign propaganda.
- Promote a unified national narrative based on pluralism and tolerance.

## **5.3 Strengthening Citizen Trust & Social Contract**

- Improve government transparency through digital governance.
- Reform law enforcement agencies for citizen-friendly policing.
- Launch national civic engagement programs to involve youth, women, and minorities in governance.

## **Conclusion**

Pakistan's security strategy must evolve to address both traditional and non-traditional threats. By adopting a comprehensive approach that integrates military preparedness with economic development, regional cooperation, and internal peacebuilding, Pakistan can bolster its national security and reduce vulnerabilities. These recommendations, focusing on strategic regional engagement, socio-economic development, and

modernized counter-terrorism efforts, will help Pakistan navigate its complex security environment and promote stability in the region.

## *Introduction*

The Pakistan National Security Policy 2022-2026 (NSP) is a well-considered effort to harmonize different national institutions towards defined national interests and core objectives. An important aspect of this effort is a holistic approach to addressing the socio-economic and political challenges faced by Pakistan. The document clearly defines the basic framework of functions and responsibilities of all state institutions within their respective areas of operation towards a coordinated objective under a citizen-centric, economy-oriented approach.

In this perspective, military security carries pivotal importance in ensuring the safety of the territorial integrity of the country and the internal security of its people as essential prerequisites for peace, prosperity, development, and socio-economic and political growth.

With regard to military security, this paper deliberates on two basic strategies: the protection of physical territorial borders and national assets against foreign elements, and the security of its people within the country's geographical borders.

For safeguarding the military security of the country, sound military strategies need to be devised. The term "strategy" has a rich etymology, tracing its origins from the French word *\*stratégie\** and ultimately back to the Greek word *\*stratēgia\**, which means 'generalship' and is derived from *\*stratēgos\** (Oxford).

In Pakistan, military strategy is defined as the application of military resources to help achieve grand strategic objectives in line with constitutional responsibilities and geopolitical exigencies. It involves defining military strategic objectives and the desired end state to protect national interests. It also outlines the military actions needed to achieve those objectives, the allocation of resources, and the application of constraints.

## *Situational Analysis*

After extensive active operations in different regions, both border and urban centers, over a span of almost two decades, and proactive reinforcements, the menace of terrorism was brought under control. However, in a recent resurgence phenomenon, which mainly started after the Fall of Kabul in August 2020, terrorist activities have once again begun occurring in different parts of the country. The armed forces and security agencies are engaged on the Western border to curtail the ingress of these elements into Pakistan and eliminate their hideouts in rural and urban setups.

Coupled with security issues, we are also facing an acute economic crisis and financial management challenges, mostly emanating from or impacted by political turmoil in the country, to the detriment of our international image.

Under the latest neo-realistic approach, based on an anarchic international order and an interest-oriented framework, there are issue-based and skewed alliances serving the interests of a few to the detriment of many. Pakistan is largely dependent on old allies such as China and Saudi Arabia.

## *Scope*

This paper examines Pakistan's military strategy and the multifaceted challenges confronting the nation. It explores how Pakistan has responded to these challenges and the intricate interplay between its security policies and the evolving security landscape. The complex security environment and the need to adapt to a changing world have rendered Pakistan's approach to security and military strategy an evolving and dynamic process.

## *Problem Statement*

Defence and security have been the main focus of Pakistan due to its unique geo-strategic position and political considerations since its inception. However, the menace of terrorism and the non-conventional warfare challenges of insurgencies have changed the traditional dynamics of defence and security parameters worldwide. Therefore, in light of these new threats and challenges and Pakistan's response, this study will analyze the defence and military strategies of Pakistan, focusing on policy domains and operational capabilities.

## *Legal Framework*

As per the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan (Article 245), the Armed Forces shall, under the directions of the Federal Government, defend Pakistan against external aggression or threats of war and, subject to law, act in aid of civil power when called upon to do so (GoP, 1973).

## *National Security Policy 2022-2026 (NSP)*

The NSP tries to recognize both traditional and non-traditional security aspects and threats. It places economic security at the core of comprehensive national security. It does not claim to replace geopolitics with geo-economics but acknowledges their complementary roles. It affirms that a stronger economy enables robust security by allocating more resources to national security and defence.

The document highlights the symbiotic relationship between economic, traditional, and human security within an evolving environment containing multiple centers of economic and military power in a contemporary global landscape drifting towards multi-polarity. It identifies Pakistan's geostrategic location, its proximity to global flashpoints, and the ongoing global competition—something described as our negative relevance to the regional and global power construct.

At the government level, a National Security Policy (2022-2026) has been approved and issued (National Security Division, 2022). However, a comprehensive national security strategy (inclusive of traditional and non-traditional security) and a comprehensive military strategy as a document are not available.

## *Defence Capabilities*

Considering its defence and security needs, Pakistan maintains military collaboration with various countries such as China, France, the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Russia. Pakistan, along with having its own robust defence manufacturing industry, has also incorporated military equipment from other countries (Armedforces.eu, 2023).

Pakistan has a wealth of well-organized, well-equipped, and well-trained Armed Forces, along with strong defence capabilities. According to the Global Firepower (GFP) index, Pakistan's military is ranked among the top 10 militaries in the world (GFP, 2023). The defence capabilities of Pakistan consist of the following:

### **1. *Armed Forces***

Pakistan has a well-structured and organized military comprising three main branches: The Pakistan Army, the Pakistan Navy, and the Pakistan Air Force. These forces are responsible for the defense of the country.

### **2. *Nuclear Deterrence***

Pakistan does not adhere to a No First Use nuclear policy and is prepared to give a "full-spectrum response to any threat to the country's sovereignty and security." In a volatile security environment and the context of India, the existing military equation between India and Pakistan highlights a mutual vulnerability dilemma. Despite the military and geoeconomic imbalance between the two nations, their balanced strategic forces have created a situation where neither state can conclude a war with a "favorable outcome," irrespective of their power disparities.

This has resulted in a paradoxical stability-instability security dilemma due to their symmetrical nuclear capabilities, which have significantly constrained conventional warfighting strategies for both countries (Yasmin, 2016).

### **3. *Conventional Forces***

Pakistan's conventional military capabilities consist of highly trained personnel and a variety of armored units, fighter jets, tanks, submarines, frigates, and other conventional military assets.

### **4. *Missile Development***

Pakistan has developed an advanced missile program, including short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles, to bolster its defense capabilities.

### **5. *Military Industry***

Pakistan has established indigenous defense manufacturing capabilities, producing a range of military equipment, including small and medium arms, armored vehicles, and aircraft.

### **6. *UN Peacekeeping Missions***

Pakistan's involvement in UN peacekeeping has been a success story. Over more than six decades, Pakistan has contributed 230,000 peacekeepers to 47 missions across the world. Today, UN peacekeepers face complex and unprecedented challenges, especially from criminal and terrorist groups, such

as those in the Sahel region. Ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers remains a priority.

Pakistan will continue to collaborate with the UN to develop the capabilities and robust mandates required for successful enforcement actions by the UN and international forces where needed.

***Pakistan vs. India - Comparison***

The India-Pakistan rivalry, rooted in historical and geopolitical tensions, has led to an enduring arms race and a focus on military preparedness. The unresolved Kashmir issue remains a major source of contention and tension between the two nations.

This arms race has extended to the acquisition of both conventional and nuclear weapons. Pakistan has maintained a policy of minimum deterrence, seeking to possess the minimum nuclear and conventional capabilities necessary to deter potential aggression. India, on the other hand, has pursued a more expansive military modernization and strategic force development approach.

***Comparative Military strengths and Capabilities of Pakistan & India***

Aspect	India	Pakistan
Population	Approx. 1.45 billion	241 Million
<b>MILITARY &amp; DEFENCE (Armedforces.eu, 2023) (Macrotrends, 2023) (Saleem, 2023)</b>		
Defense Budget (2023)	Approx. \$73 billion USD • 2 % of GDP • 13 % of Total Budget	Approx. \$6.3 billion USD • 1.7 % of GDP • 12.5 % of Total Budget
Active Military Personne	Approx. 1.45 million	Approx. 654,800
Reserve Military Personne	Approx. 2.2 million	Approx. 500,000
Tanks	Approx. 4,614	Approx. 3,742
Aircraft	Approx. 2,210 (including fighters and others)	Approx. 1,413 (including fighters and others)
Naval Vessels	Approx. 295 (including major warships)	Approx. 114 (including major warships)
Nuclear Weapons	Estimated nuclear warheads 150-160	Estimated nuclear warheads 165-175

***Regional Strategic Constraints***

Pakistan's military strategy is focused on deterrence and full-spectrum operations. From both traditional and non-traditional security perspectives, Pakistan faces threats from internal and external actors. Since its inception, Pakistan has confronted external threats along its eastern and western borders. On the east, where it shares a 2,912 km border with India, unprecedented



threats have persisted. To the west, Pakistan shares a porous 2,430 km border with Afghanistan. Additionally, Pakistan and China share a 523 km border, and the Pakistan-Iran border is 909 km long.

### *Regional Strategic Constraints*

#### *Cold Start Doctrine*

The Cold Start Doctrine is an Indian offensive defense policy. The doctrine aims to use offensive or pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan under the shadow of nuclear weapons. Through this doctrine, all three armed services of India will launch integrated strikes without employing nuclear weapons. This offensive war doctrine was taken seriously by policymakers and military leadership in Pakistan, prompting a redefinition of Pakistan's war-fighting concepts.

#### *The Indian Factor and the Kashmir Issue*

The Indian factor, especially the unresolved Kashmir issue, has remained a major regional strategic constraint in Pakistan's military strategy. Further complications arose in February 2019 when the Modi government unilaterally abrogated Articles 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution. These decisions brought Pakistan-India relations to a new low and further heightened the threat perception of India in Pakistan's military strategy.

#### *The Instability in Afghanistan*

An unstable Afghanistan has serious ramifications for Pakistan's military security strategy and regional security. The United States used Afghanistan as a proxy state against the Soviet Union, and after the latter's collapse, Afghanistan was left in ruins without practical steps for reconstruction. It subsequently became a battleground for proxy wars involving regional powers.

From a realist perspective, Pakistan views "strategic depth" as a way to ensure Afghanistan does not pose a threat to its western border during a potential war with India, thus freeing forces to counter India's numerical superiority on the eastern border. From Pakistan's military perspective, worse than an unfriendly regime in Afghanistan would be a pro-India government. The fencing of Pakistan's border with Afghanistan has been an important milestone in the country's military strategy under these volatile circumstances.

#### *Complicated Relations with Iran*

Mutual suspicions hinder opportunities for Pakistan and Iran to jointly confront the Baloch insurgencies affecting both nations. Before the September 11, 2001 attacks, Iran worked against Pakistan's interests by supporting the Northern Alliance, which opposed the Pakistan-backed Taliban. Conversely, Iran accuses Pakistan of supporting Jundullah, a group believed to be responsible for several suicide attacks targeting Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps officers and other Iranian sites near the Iran-Pakistan border.

This scenario creates difficult decisions for Pakistan's military strategy, as it must balance regional stability with its national security interests.

### *Comparative Analysis of Pakistan's Military Strategy*

Pakistan's military strategy against the perceived threat from India is "strategically defensive" but "operationally offensive." Aware of the risk of losing territory in a war with India, the Pakistan Army has developed a "Riposte" strategy. This strategy tasks strike corps with taking the initiative in a conflict, pushing deep into Indian territory, while other corps hold back the initial Indian advance by leveraging momentum against a numerically superior adversary.

Considering India's military capability and its declared Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), Pakistan's military strategy is designed to counter the adversary's capabilities rather than intentions. Pakistan's response to CSD has been twofold: first, the induction of tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) to lower its nuclear redlines; second, a clear refusal to commit to a "No First Use" nuclear weapons policy.

### *India*

India's military strategy employs a full-spectrum approach, but it places greater emphasis on conventional warfare than Pakistan's strategy. With a much larger military, India is heavily investing in new technologies, such as precision-guided munitions and cyber warfare capabilities.

India's military strategy also prioritizes offensive capabilities. It has developed several offensive doctrines, including the Cold Start Doctrine, aimed at achieving a decisive advantage in a conventional conflict with Pakistan.

### *United Kingdom*

The United Kingdom's military strategy is centered on expeditionary warfare and global power projection. Despite having a relatively small conventional military, the UK possesses a highly trained and well-equipped professional force. The UK military is technologically advanced and designed to protect national interests globally while contributing to NATO operations.

### *United States*

The United States' military strategy emphasizes global power projection and full-spectrum operations. With the largest and most powerful military in the world, the U.S. boasts advanced technological capabilities. Its military strategy is designed to protect U.S. interests worldwide, as well as to deter and defeat aggression.

The following table compares the military strategies of Pakistan, India, the United Kingdom, and the United States:

Country	Military strategy	Key focus
<b>Pakistan</b>	Deterrence and full-spectrum operations	Protecting the country from both external and internal threats
<b>India</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deterrence and full-spectrum operations</li> <li>• Focused on Offensive capabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting the country from both</li> <li>• external and internal threats,</li> <li>• but also focused on projecting power in the region</li> </ul>
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	National security, dominance in the region and across Islamic world	Saudi Arabia's future defense expenditure is driven by national security concerns, regional power dynamics, military modernization, defense partnerships, energy infrastructure protection
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expeditionary warfare</li> <li>• Global power projection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting the UK's interests around the world</li> <li>• Contributing to NATO operations</li> </ul>
<b>United States</b>	Global power projection and full-spectrum operations	Protecting the US's interests around the world and deterring and defeating aggression

### *Probable Threats of Indian Military Strategy to Pakistan*

Pakistan faces a number of threats from India due to its military strategy, including:

#### *1. Conventional Military Superiority*

India has a significant conventional military superiority over Pakistan in terms of manpower, equipment, and resources. This could give India a decisive advantage in a conventional war.

#### *2. ii. Nuclear Deterrence*

India has a nuclear arsenal that is larger than Pakistan's. This could deter Pakistan from using its own nuclear weapons, even if it felt that its security was under existential threat.

#### *3. Proactive military strategy*

India has adopted a more proactive military strategy in recent years. This has included increasing military deployments along the border with Pakistan, conducting more aggressive military exercises, and developing new weapons systems. This could lead to an accidental escalation of tensions between the two countries.

#### *4. Strategic alliances*

India has a number of strategic alliances with other countries, including the United States, Russia, and France. These alliances could give India an advantage in a conflict with Pakistan, as they could provide India with access to advanced military technology and support from other countries.

In addition to these threats, Pakistan is also concerned about India's growing

influence in the region. India is working to strengthen its ties with other countries in the South Asian region, such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. This could lead to Pakistan being isolated in the region and could make it more difficult for Pakistan to defend its interests.

Pakistan is also concerned about India's support for terrorist groups in Pakistan. India has been accused of providing support to groups such as the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). These groups have carried out a number of attacks in Pakistan, which have killed and injured thousands of people.

### *Protection of Borders & National Assets*

The National Security Policy (NSP, 2022-26) of Pakistan emphasizes securing borders to preserve territorial integrity from traditional and non-traditional threats. Pakistan has a border of 6,774 km, sharing boundaries with India, Iran, Afghanistan, China, and a coastline along the Arabian Sea. There are 8 formal border crossing points with Afghanistan, 3 with Iran, 1 with China, and 3 with India. Approximately 1,000 border posts have been established by Pakistani forces to secure the border with Afghanistan, while hundreds more are positioned along the border with Iran.

The borders with India and Afghanistan are fenced with barbed wire for territorial security, while fencing of the Pakistan-Iran border is in progress (Nazar, 2022). The border with China, however, remains open. The fencing of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border faces challenges due to difficult terrain, resistance from the Afghan government, local tribes residing on both sides of the border, and attacks by militants targeting the security forces' fencing teams. Despite these efforts, the border with Afghanistan is still considered porous and difficult to secure.

### *Traditional and Non-Traditional Threats*

Traditional threats of war persist, particularly due to hostility with India. However, the possession of nuclear weapons has largely deterred this threat. On the other hand, non-traditional threats—such as hostile agencies' covert activities, terrorism, smuggling, illegal migration, and human trafficking—have significantly worsened the security situation.

The porous borders, especially in the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) and Balochistan, exacerbate internal security challenges, leading to terrorism, extremism, and deteriorating law and order. Narco-smuggling, human trafficking, goods smuggling, arms and ammunition trafficking, currency smuggling, and illegal Afghan migration further compound the threats. Consequently, Pakistan's military strategy has shifted focus from countering traditional threats to addressing internal security challenges.

### *Economic and Social Impact*

Smuggling mafias are causing unprecedented losses to the national exchequer and Pakistan's economy. Numerous unfrequented routes along the Pakistan-Afghanistan and Pakistan-Iran borders are exploited by terrorists, Narco-smugglers, human traffickers, and illegal Afghan migrants for infiltration.

Border security is managed by paramilitary forces, customs authorities, FIA, and law enforcement agencies. However, there have been reports of nexus between smuggling mafias and border authorities, allowing transnational operations that cause economic and social unrest.

Daily currency smuggling: Approximately \$5 million is smuggled daily from Pakistan to Afghanistan, depleting foreign exchange reserves and contributing to the rupee's depreciation against the dollar (Dilawar, 2023).

Annual economic losses: Smuggling of goods and currency costs the Pakistani economy an estimated \$23 billion annually, undermining monetary policies and leading to economic instability (Haq, 2023).

Illegal Afghan migrants: Over 1.7 million illegal Afghan migrants reside in Pakistan, entering via porous borders or through crossing points like Torkham and Chaman, causing social and demographic unrest (Dawn, 2023).

### *Terrorism*

Terrorism is a complex and contentious term that generally refers to the use of violence or threats of violence by non-state actors to create fear, intimidate, or achieve political, religious, or ideological objectives. It is a form of asymmetric warfare that often targets civilians or non-combatants to maximize its impact (Jenkins, 2023).

Domestic and international terrorism are two distinct categories of terrorism that differ in terms of their geographic scope, motivations, and targets. Domestic terrorism refers to acts of terrorism that occur within the borders of a single country and are perpetrated by individuals or groups who are citizens or residents of that country. International terrorism involves individuals or groups from one country engaging in terrorist activities in another country or targeting foreign entities.

Pakistan is facing the threat of terrorism as a consequence of US war against

terror in Afghanistan, Sectarian militant outfits and the rise of sub nationalist elements in Balochistan after the Akbar Bugti Killing in 2006. The terrorist outfits are involved in terrorist attacks on Security Forces, Law Enforcement Agencies, civilians and govt installations.

Various terrorist groups that operate in Pakistan are

- Religious groups: TTP, JuA, LI, AQIS, ISKP
- Sectarian groups: LeJ, SSP, Sipah Muhammad
- Ethnic Groups: BLA, BRA, UBA, SRA, BLF
- Ethno-Political Group: MQM

Terrorism and extremism badly affected Pakistan, resulting in losses of 83000 of lives, Rs.35 Trillion losses to national economy, 5 million displacements of war affected victims leading to civil, social and demographic unrest in the country (NACTA Portal, 2023). The long-term exposure to terrorism has promoted an atmosphere of intolerance in the country resulting in political, social, ethnic and religious intolerance in the society.

### *Counterterrorism Operations*

Pakistan is under a cyclical threat of terrorism and extremism since long, the threat of militancy is multifaceted i.e. religious (TTP, ISKP, JuA), sectarian (LeJ, SSP) and ethnic (BLA, BRA, BLF).

#### *1. External nontraditional threat permeating via porous border*

Since the inception of War against Terror, the CT operations became major part of Pakistan military strategy, the CT operations were launched by Pakistan in response to the external threats emerging from the absconding militants of Al-Qaeda, TTA and other outfits. The militants on the run due to the US war against terror sought shelter in ex-FATA created internal security problems for Pakistan.

The establishment of hideouts by the absconding militants of Al-Qaeda and TTA in exFATA not only challenged the state writ in conducting attacks on SFs but also indoctrinated youth of the area. The emergence of TTP and other militant outfits is a consequence of the transnational militant outfits securing strongholds in FATA thus created an atmosphere for militancy and terrorism (Shah, 2020).

#### *2. Military strategy of countering nontraditional threat -CT Operations (2001-2023)*

##### *a. Phase-I; Hunting non local militants (Al-Qaeda, TTA, IMU)*

The CT operations during the early days of war against terror (2001-2006) were mainly focused on hunting the absconding terrorists of Al-Qaeda, Tehreek Taliban Afghanistan (TTA) and other international terrorist outfits in ex-FATA and KP. During this period, largescale CT Operation Al Mizan along with small scale operations were carried in South Waziristan mainly focusing on eliminating the bases / hideouts of militants of Al-Qaeda, TTA, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan etc. Besides, Intelligence Based Operations were

carried out all across Pakistan to hunt the militants. By 2003, the Security Forces (SFs) and Law Enforcement Agencies arrested more than 400 Al-Qaeda activists from FATA and various key pioneers from other parts of Pakistan. Similarly, the driving force of 9/11, Khalid Sheik Mohammad was held from Rawalpindi in 2003 (Ahmed, 2020). The dialogue and peace process with the militants were part of the CT strategy to eliminate the threats of militancy, however, the peace process was derailed subsequently once the militants reorganize itself (Ahmed, The Role of Pakistan Against Counter Terrorism , 2020).

***b. Phase-II- Fighting, eliminating the hideouts of local militants (TTP, JuA, LeJ, LI) and reconciliation***

The CT operations during the period (2007-2014) were marked by marked by largescale operations all across ex-FATA and PATA. The emergence of Baloch sub nationalist militant outfits after Akbar Bugti Killing in 2006 and of Tehreek Taliban Pakistan (TTP) after the Lal Masjid Incident posed a great challenge to State security apparatus as militants/ insurgents were of Pakistani Origin, has a strong ideological ground of Lal Majid and Akbar Bugti Killing episode. A massive spell of attacks was observed after 2007 due to the emergence of the TTP and BLA /BRA / BLF resulting in attacks on civilians, LEAs and govt installations. The militants during this period were holding areas in Swat, Bajaur, Khyber, Buner, South Waziristan and North Waziristan. Major operation during the period includes Operation Zalzala (SW, 2008), Operation Rah-e-Rast (Malakand Division, 2008-09), Operation Sher Dil (Bajaur, 2008), Operation Daraghلام (Khyber 2008), Operation Rah-i-Nijat (SW, 2009) and Operation Zar-e-Azb (NW, 2014). The CT military strategy during this period was mainly focused on targeting the militant groups. The strategy was mainly Kinetic / operation driven in nature, however, addressing the root causes of militancy / non-kinetic part was missing during this period. Lack of a proper non kinetic strategy to address the root causes of militancy always led to resurgence of militancy in the area (Ahmed, The Role of Pakistan Against Counter Terrorism , 2020).

***c. Phase-III-Fighting the militants, addressing the root causes and reconciliation with militants***

Major shift in military CT operation strategy was observed after the incident of APS in 2014, comprehensive dialogues were carried out by all stakeholder of the society which led to the formulation of National Action Plan (NAP) in 2014/15. The National Action Plan was a comprehensive CT strategy to counter militancy through kinetic and non-kinetic means. To reap the gains of CT active operations, the NAP also devised plans for countering the financing of terrorism, narrative building against rising extremism, deradicalization, development and mainstreaming of FATA and Balochistan underdeveloped areas, Madaris Reforms, Reconciliation and many other aspects of the CT.

NAP implementation remained successful in countering the militancy which led to a momentous decrease in the terrorist attacks in Pakistan. The TTP and other terror networks were successfully eliminated in Pakistan. NAP was revised in 2021 as some of the aspects of CT were addressed/resolved. The NAP remained successful in countering and resolving the threat of militancy till 2021 (Ahmed, The Role of Pakistan Against Counter Terrorism, 2020).

*d. Phase-IV-Emerging threat after fall of Kabul & failed Peace Talks*

A rise in militancy was observed after the fall of Kabul and failed peace talks with TTP, the arrival of TTP militants in NMDs and KP and the subsequent rise in terrorist attacks posing a great threat to the peace in the country. Though, the LEAs are hyper active in countering the threats of militancy, however, the TTP getting inspiration and ideological support from IEA Govt in Afghanistan putting Pakistan security apparatus in a precarious position.

**HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE**

As per 1973 Constitution and National Security Policy (2022-26), protection of human/fundamental rights is the responsibility of the state, the state has responsibility to ensure protection of these rights from the abuse of state and non-state actors.

The militant activities of ethnic separatist elements, religious & sectarian extremists always led to the violation of human rights in NMDs, KP and Balochistan. The militant outfits are incessantly targeting the inhabitants of the area by, collecting extortions, target killing of the local notables, banning education of women, disruption of anti-polio vaccination campaign and kidnapping for ransom.

The subsequent action / operations by Security forces, LEAs and Intelligence agencies to neutralize the threats of militancy was tailed by displacements, destruction of property, reported maltreatment of locals at security checkpoints, social and economic afflictions on war affected victims. The LEAs operations was coupled with the issue of missing persons, dead body recoveries, Landmines Blasts on victims.

The human rights violations whether by militants or due to the operational necessity of Security Forces caused instability and insecurity in the affected areas. The local uprisings in the form of civil rights movements, protests, sit-ins and long marches opened another front for the state security apparatus. It is observed that some of the movements objectives, demands and criticism was beyond the scope of their problems, allegedly aimed at promoting unrest and propagating the stance of the hostile intelligence agencies.

As per NAP policy guidelines, the state institutions are holistically addressing the genuine concerns of the aggrieved strata by removing landmines, recovery of missing persons, target killings of locals by militants, rehabilitation and mainstreaming of the war affected / under developed areas (Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, 2023).

The 9<sup>th</sup> May tragic episode of attacks on security installations by angry mob of PTI resulted in arrest and apprehension of PTI workers and leaders, subsequent re-apprehension after bail granted by courts and trial of some workers in military courts is perceived by public and intelligentsia as violation of human rights and denial of access to fair trial (Malik, 2023).

***Counterterrorism Cooperation***

The terrorism is a global phenomenon impacting all nation states, the cooperation and collective approach of all states are necessary to counter the threat of terrorism and extremism. Pakistan being a frontline state against US



led War on Terror came under the spell of incessant lethal attacks of militants and extremists from ISKP, TTP, JuA, Al-Qaeda and local sub-nationalist outfits.

Pakistan contributed as a major partner in the war against terror, successfully eliminated and neutralized the threat of Al-Qaeda, ISKP and other international militant outfits (Ahmed, 2020). However, in an unconventional warfare like the one we are fighting, the militants continue to reorganize and regenerate itself, start posing bigger threat to world peace. In the dynamics of terrorism, the initiative generally lies with the militants/assailants, the militants frequently switching over from one operational tactic to another tactic.

Pakistan needs continuous help and assistance from international community to counter the emerging threat of terrorism emanating from TTP, ISKP and Al-Qaeda, as these outfits are reorganizing itself to launch attacks across the globe.

US, UK, Australia, China, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Canada, Japan and EU continued support and cooperation in field of counterterrorism cooperation has helped Pakistan to enhance its capacity in countering threats of terrorism (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2023).

However, after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, US assistance in the war against terrorism has reduced to minimum thus keeping Pakistan security apparatus to tackle emerging issue of terrorism at its own. Pakistan needs to seek help and engage the global stakeholders against the war against terrorism, as the terrorism cannot be countered at its own. Pakistan should engage Afghanistan via diplomatic channel to take action against militant hideouts as per Doha Agreement protocols.

### ***TECHNOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS - MILITARY STRATEGY***

Pakistan military is regularly up-grading and modernizing its technological capabilities by incorporating latest technology and equipment through collaboration with its allies like China, USA, UK, France & Turkey. However, historically major support has been received from China as it being our close strategic partner helped Pakistan develop & expand its Nuclear & Missile program along with strengthening conventional Military power.

National Security Policy 2022-26 has identified a number of aspects related to future Technological goals for Pakistan Military / Defence. The document also provides an outline of Policy objectives regarding these aspects but details about strategies to implement and achieve the desired objectives is missing. The salient aspects of Technological objectives in NSP include (NSP, 2022):-

- Space Security
- Information and Cyber Security Threats
- Hybrid Warfare

### *Analysis*

The Military & Defence capabilities of Pakistan face multi-faceted dangers from both Internal and External players especially from hostile approach from countries like India and Israel. Pakistan is confronted by a wide array of multi-dimensional threats and challenges. Hostile forces are in full play to isolate it internationally, as terms like 'irresponsible' state and 'sponsor of state terrorism' are used liberally to malign it. Considering the fast evolving Military strategies of countries across the globe based on latest technologies, Pakistan faces a multitude of threats as mentioned below

(Nawaz, 2023):-

#### *Hybrid Warfare*

Hybrid warfare or 5<sup>th</sup> generation war is a strategy that combines conventional warfare, irregular warfare, and cyber warfare with other non-military methods, such as propaganda, deception, and economic coercion. It is a complex and evolving concept, but it is generally understood to be a type of warfare that is designed to blur the lines between war and peace, and to undermine the enemy's ability to defend itself.

Pakistan has been a target of hybrid war in numerous aspects as detailed below:

##### *a. Social Media*

Social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc are being used by the enemies of Pakistan to spread disinformation. The basic target of this propaganda is the youth of Pakistan especially in regions like Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan and Tribal areas. The current political situation has already induced polarization in the society and the same is being used by the non-state actors and external forces to spread anarchy and chaos in Pakistan. A few examples of the same are:-

- Indian Chronicles- Exposed by EU Disinfo Lab
- FATF Grey List - Propaganda by Indian Media
- Propagating insurgencies in Pakistan through BLA, TTP, PTM etc by spreading misleading media information and brain washing the local population (Yameen, 2019).

##### *b. Cyber Attacks*

Cyber-attacks have increased the vulnerability of Pakistan's defence capabilities and also exposed its weaknesses. Technological advancements have made the existing digital databases of Pakistan exposed to threats. For instance, the cyber-attack on NADRA website in Nov 2021 hacked the personal data of Millions of Pakistanis.

(ExpressTribune, 2021).

#### *Space Science Diplomacy*

Pakistan is still in the early stages of developing its space diplomacy

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capabilities and is not yet prepared for the anticipated threats. Pakistan's space agency, SUPARCO, has participated in a number of international space science projects, but these projects have been relatively small-scale. On the other hand, India is decades ahead of Pakistan in terms of space science, example Chandaryan - III satellite launched successfully in July 2023. Moreover, India possesses Kinetic & Non-Kinetic Satellite assault weapons which can cause serious damage to Pakistan's mediocre satellite infrastructure and in-sufficient defence mechanisms. (Ali, 2022).

*c. Strategic Technologies*

The latest generation of warfare superseding 5<sup>th</sup> Generation war is the advent of a combination of Seven (07) strategic Technologies (Zaidi, 2019). These include:

- Autonomous things (robotics, internet of things (IOT))
- Unmanned autonomous vehicles UAVs
- Under-water UAVs
- Augmented analytics
- Artificial intelligence based infrastructure
- 5G, cloud/ fog
- Block-chains, Crypto-currencies & digital assets

All of these have a cover of regulations, ethics, policies, legalities and so on. Therefore, concerted efforts are required both on diplomatic front and technological grounds to protect Pakistan's interests.

***IMPACT OF ECONOMICAL / POLITICAL INSTABILITY***

Pakistan's economy is in a fragile state, with high inflation, unemployment, and debt. This limits Pakistan's ability to spend on its military. In recent years, Pakistan has been forced to cut its military budget in order to save money. This has had a negative impact on Pakistan's military modernization efforts and its ability to maintain its current level of readiness.

Pakistan has a history of political instability. This has made it difficult for the country to develop a coherent and long-term military strategy. The frequent changes in government have also disrupted the implementation of military modernization plans.

<b>ECONOMY (IMF, 2023) (CompareEconomy, 2023) (Hilton, 2023)</b>		
<b>World Ranking</b>	5	41
<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP)</b>	3,176,295,065,497 US\$	348,262,544,719 US\$
<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth Rate</b>	6.3	-0.5
<b>Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita</b>	2,256 US\$	1660 US \$

<b>Inflation consumer prices Annual (%)</b>	4.8 %	28.3 %
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### *Impact on Military Strategy and Defense Capabilities*

The economic and political challenges facing Pakistan have had a negative impact on its military strategy and defense capabilities. Pakistan has been forced to focus on deterrence and low-cost capabilities, rather than investing in high-end military technologies. This has made Pakistan more vulnerable to its adversaries, such as India.

The following are some specific examples of the impact of Pakistan's economy and political turmoil on its military strategy and defense capabilities:

- Pakistan has been forced to delay or cancel major military procurement projects. For example, in 2022, Pakistan was forced to cancel a \$1.5 billion contract for the purchase of eight Turkish T-37 trainer jets due to financial constraints.
- Pakistan has been forced to reduce its military spending. In 2023, Pakistan's military budget was reduced by 5% compared to the previous year.
- Pakistan has been forced to focus on low-cost capabilities, such as ballistic missiles and drones. These capabilities are relatively inexpensive to develop and maintain, but they are not as effective as high-end military technologies, such as fighter jets and warships.
- Pakistan has been forced to rely on foreign military assistance. Pakistan receives significant military assistance from countries such as the United States and China. This assistance helps Pakistan to maintain its current level of readiness, but it also makes Pakistan dependent on foreign powers for its security.

## REGIONAL COOPERATION

The National Security Policy (NSP) has drawn larger parameters of integrated efforts directed towards coherent objectives to reinforce the internal and external objectives with regard to military security in the latest citizen-centric approach. In this regard the role of Pakistan in different forums such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), South Asian Association of Regional Countries (SAARC) SCO and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in terms of regional connectivity, economic cooperation and political platform form mitigation multilateral issues is important.

Pakistan has been an active member of SCO due to its affiliation of being situated at the confluence of Central Asia, China and South Asia and friendly relationship with China and Central Asian countries since their inception. Pakistan-Russia relations have significantly improved since the end of the 'cold war' era. India is no longer in a position to exercise 'veto' or cap the development of beneficial partnership between Pakistan and Russia, due to her drifting towards the Western side by joining QUAD and other US-sponsored initiatives. Since, the Indian shift, Pakistan remains a viable conduit for Russia to access Arabian Sea for commerce and trade. SCO offers huge opportunities to Pakistan to tap into the vast economic, trade, investment, energy, agricultural, industrial, services, tourism, and connectivity potential within the organization.

### *Pakistan and Central Asia*

Central Asia countries offer abundant natural resources opportunity to Pakistan such as gas, coal, electricity, and uranium to Pakistan under the trade connectivity projects. The optimum utilization of the region's resources could ensure self-sufficiency and make it an important market for trading, transport, and sales of energy. The main challenge has been the scarcity of financial recourse and slow pace of progress on Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (TAPI) as well as Central Asia and South Asia (CASA) 1000 electricity transmission project manifest the above impediments. The recent Pak-Afghan-Uzbekistan Railway project initiative could be an important addition to substantiate regional connectivity. The security situation in Afghanistan and international community gap with Taliban government is also a contemporary problem.

### *Pakistan and Russia*

The summit, ministerial and senior officials' meetings under the SCO aegis provide use useful opportunity to have leadership and operational level exchanges between Pakistan and Russia leading to some convergences on geo-political and geo-economic plains. Russia, which was once considered Pakistan as staunch member of its rival alliances, is now amenable to explore mutually beneficial cooperation with Pakistan. Recent import of oil by Pakistan from Russia at less than open market price is expected to become a precursor for enhanced trade in energy, agriculture, engineering, manufacturing, and services sectors between the two countries. Common SCO membership would complement the trade and economic relations, enhancing confidence and reducing apprehensions in doing business such as 'North - South gas pipeline'.

### *Pakistan-China*

The Pakistan- China all-round comprehensive friendship and partnership in the

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form of CPEC “a flagship programme of BRI” and common membership of SCO has brought new dimensions and opened new vistas for cooperation. This has been an important factor in the strong Chinese support to Pakistan’s bid for SCO’s membership. Pakistan enjoyed a great advantage of benefiting from the well-informed guidance of its trusted friend especially in the initial phase of joining the SCO.

### *Counter-Terrorism Initiative under SCO*

Counter Terrorism Military Exercises (CTMEs) are an integral part of SCO collaboration under the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) and hosted CTME in 2021 which India did not participate in. Pakistan has participated in the CTMEs hosted by SCO members except the one hosted by India in 2022. Pakistan has proactive role in this forum and due to opportunity to share its own successful counter-terrorism experiences, involving planning and execution of intelligence based operations, as well as large scale kinetic action against the terrorists. Pakistan also gets to benefit from the advanced electronic surveillance and technology based intelligence deployed by China and Russia. SCO RATS successfully facilitated prevention of many terrorist attacks, neutralizing terrorists, destruction of training sites, and arrest of armed miscreants. Under the cooperation in combating narcotics, drugs and psychotropic substances, huge catches of drugs, heroin, precursors and other proscribed substances were seized from traffickers in the SCO territories. Development of connectivity in the region is among the top priorities of Pakistan in the SCO’s context. As the SCO continues to expand its influence, Pakistan stands to gain substantial benefits in terms of economic integration, security cooperation, cultural and people-to-people exchanges. (Amin 2023)

Pakistan enjoys close defence and economic ties with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members, including KSA, UAE and Qatar. Recently, Pakistan’s military launched a two-week multinational military exercise aiming to further harness military relations with Qatar, Türkiye, and other friendly countries of the GCC (Arab News, 2023).

Based on the bilateral strategic partnership with the Kingdom Saudi Arabia (KSA), Pakistan has an enduring military cooperation framework the Kingdom encompassing defence cooperation, training and advisory support, and export of defence equipment apart from the military personnel of Paki army stationed in the Kingdom for defence of the two cities. A recent example of military-to-military cooperation between the two countries is the joint drill named AL BATTAR-I, involving the Special Forces. The primary objective of this exercise is to strengthen bilateral relations and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences (Sarah, 2023).

### *SAARC*

The objectives outlined in the SAARC Charter include promoting the welfare of South Asians and improving their quality of life as well as accelerating economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is a recent tweet offered that Pakistan is ready to explore a mechanism for revitalization of SAAR framework, which practically dormant from Pakistan’s perspective since 2016 when a Summit meeting scheduled to be held in Islamabad was boycotted by India on the pretext of Ori Attack (Tribune, 2023). The main predicament to SAARC active role is Pak-India

rivalry and Indian influence on the other small regional counties. In this context our relations with Bangladesh due to tainted history is also one major hurdle. Similarly, the India is investing economically in their area of influence such recent Indian financial support package

3.8 billion USD for Sri Lanka when the country defaulted last year.

### ***DIPLOMACY AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION***

It was first in 1998 that under the Strategic Review of United Kingdom (UK) became the first document to mention defence diplomacy designed to dispel hostility, build trust, and take part in developing armed forces under democratic control. Subsequently, after the 9/11 the trend took pace for increasing connection between defence and other forms of diplomacy. This is how Pakistan Army got more attention worldwide in defence diplomacy due to its frontline role in War on Terror.

Contrary to the British Army which is acknowledged for its international outreach, Pakistan has raised and fostered internationalized army in a relatively short period of time. 'The Pakistan Army has developed into a global source of 'conflict resolution expertise', education and defence diplomacy. Just as the British Army has extended the UK's influence through its ties to foreign armies, so has the Pakistan Army, including through joint exercises with the Russian military.' Both the British and Pakistan armies have developed their soft power by providing humanitarian aid overseas.

So, notwithstanding the traditional assumption that the military and soft powers are mutually exclusive, the humanitarian work of the British and Pakistan armies and their training relationship exemplify military soft power. The establishment of close ties between the two countries through joint training and defense diplomacy affirm their shared values and thus has the potential to encourage future cooperation to maintain those shared values (Hunter, 2020).

The existing defence relationship includes Pakistani officers undertaking training at the UK's Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, the Advance Command and Staff Course and the Royal College of Defence Studies. The recent visit of the British Army Chief to Islamabad was a positive development considering the domestic situation after the flood operations where the British MoD was directly involved (Tribune, 2023).

### ***Security of Maritime Routes***

The UK-Pak partnership is useful for securing British larger interests countering Iranian influence and activity in the Gulf of Oman, using Pakistan's geostrategic location for access to the Arabian Sea as an ideal partner for Britain to secure ships, particularly in light of the alleged Iranian attacks on oil tankers as well as the Iranian threats to British oil tankers moving through the Strait of Hormuz. Given Pakistan's relations with Iran are stable; Islamabad is a useful ally who can exert diplomatic pressure, as well as bolster Royal Navy operations.

Pakistan operational capability and proximity to the international waters used by smugglers, hijackers, pirates, criminals and terrorists for illicit activities and narcotics and weapon smuggling can be utilized.

Following Brexit, and in keeping with the Global Britain framework, Britain will need as many allies as possible in an increasingly hostile world. While co-

operation within the Anglosphere is the focus in reports by the Henry Jackson Society think tank, it would benefit Britain to move beyond that and engage with allies in the broader Commonwealth, such as Pakistan. Britain will have an ally in South Asia, as well as a client state for British military hardware (Shaikh, 2019).

### *INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT*

Immediate steps to reverse the escalatory dynamic of the conflict and to encourage movement toward dialogue should be taken by the parties. India and Pakistan should not leap into formal, highly publicized talks but rather embark upon back-channel steps to begin defining what talks would be. Back-channel dialogue on issues such as security, humanitarian issues, and peace dividends should commence in order to begin defining necessary and agreeable building blocks to move toward a final solution. This dialogue should be conducted without official agreements.

Formal bilateral confidence-building measures (CBMs) agreed upon at the official and unofficial levels can help effect a new process by setting into place the building blocks for an eventual agreement, targeting substantive issues such as reducing and removing troops from uncontested areas and implementing technical safeguards to monitor infiltration.

Official and unofficial support for the building of peace constituencies within and between India, Pakistan, and Kashmir should be encouraged and pursued. This support should be provided to local non-state actors that seek to address concrete problems such as the economy, the environment, the humanitarian situation, and ways to peacefully advocate and press government leaders for a comprehensive solution to the conflict. This support could develop and strengthen political will at the community level, which is necessary for the sustainability of peace processes and agreements. Issues (Carter Centre and Parleypolicy, 2023).

The Indian current government's focus on the domestic sentiments shaping its foreign policy and the approach towards Illegally India Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) dispute is the main hurdle in the way of any dialogue process. The Indian unilateral action of 5 August 2019 to eliminate the constitutional independent status of Kashmir and Pakistan response has led literally created a diplomatic deadlock.

Indian government's actions such as to hold the G-20 Youth forum meeting in IIOJK which was condemned by Pakistan as misusing the G20 forum for self-serving are counter-productive to efforts for normalization. Consequently, upon Pakistan diplomatic outreach the meeting was boycotted by Saudi Arabia and China (Guardian, 2023).

### *BALANCING EXTERNAL ALLIANCES*

Pakistan must navigate its relationships with major powers, such as the United States, China, and Russia, while also maintaining a strategic balance in the region.

Pakistan tries to reboot ties with the U.S., cement its alliance with China and even reached out to Russia in the midst of the Ukraine crisis, the strategic import of Pakistan's balancing act is under scrutiny. Pakistan's foreign policy of



appeasement has had its share of breakthroughs as well as setbacks. The article attempts to analyze Pakistan's relations with the three major powers along with the limitations it incurs.

### *USA*

The foreign policy of Pakistan has recently been marred by its efforts to align the three important and major stakeholders in the emerging multilateral world order. This has been a sensitive triangle which needs to be addressed through cautious outreach for a sustainable framework of bilateral and multinational relations with Russia. Withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan and Imran Khan's anti-American stance have been two major reasons for the downturn in the US-Pakistan relationship. The relationship of the two was significantly dependent upon the US forces stationed in Afghanistan, for which the former required good relations with Pakistan. Post the withdrawal, US dependency on Pakistan has reduced significantly (Mishra, 2022).

### *Russia*

During recent years, Pakistan has developed some basic level trust with Russia over bilateral subjects of engagement such as trade and transportation and counter-terrorism under the RATS under the SCO framework. Relations with China are playing an important role in this confidence building initiative. The Pak Stream Gas Pipeline Project in 2021, and participation in the opening ceremony of Olympics in Beijing is considered Pakistan's leaning towards Russia-China orbit by the world. Friendly relations with Russia would also add to Pakistan's geo-economic approach toward the Central Asian Countries (CARs) in terms of regional connectivity and trade projects. Pakistan's decision to take a neutral position on the Ukraine War and consequent wheat deal with Russia are positive steps towards further strengthening of Pak-Russian relations (VOA News, 2023).

## *ANALYSIS*

### *SWOT ANALYSIS - PAKISTAN MILITARY*

#### *Strengths*

- Pakistan has a very well-organized and equipped armed force, including the Pakistan Army, Pakistan Navy, and Pakistan Air Force.
- Pakistan's armed forces are battle-hardened and trained after having gone through a long and hard War on Terror.
- Pakistan maintains a credible minimum deterrence policy, which includes nuclear weapons and conventional capabilities, to deter potential threats.
- Pakistan has maintained a balance of power with its neighbor, India, which has led to a strategic stability that discourages large-scale conflicts.
- Pakistan's Military has a worthwhile experience in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations, with a focus on internal security.
- Pakistan has established defense and strategic alliances with various countries, which can provide support and access to advanced military technology.
- Pakistan has developed an indigenous defense manufacturing industry, producing a range of military equipment.

**Weaknesses:**

- Pakistan's defense budget is relatively smaller compared to its regional rival, India. Economic constraints may limit the country's ability to invest in advanced military technology and equipment.
- Political instability has resulted in in-consistent policies and poor policy implementation resulting in weakening Military strategies.
- Securing porous borders with Afghanistan and Iran remains a challenge, leading to nontraditional threats like terrorism, smuggling, and illegal migration.
- The country faces significant losses from smuggling, both in terms of goods and currency, which impacts the national economy.
- Border security presents weaknesses owing to some episodes of collusion between smuggling mafias and border authorities.
- The presence of a large number of illegal Afghans residing in Pakistan poses demographic / social unrest and internal security challenges.

**Opportunities:**

- Focusing on economic growth could enable Pakistan to allocate more resources for improving defence capabilities and military modernization.
- Improving border security infrastructure can help address non-traditional threats and increase economic stability.
- Pakistan can leverage its experience in counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations to enhance its security posture.
- The term Defence diplomacy has become more relevant to Pakistan Army after the 9/11 for peace and security initiatives with other countries based on the sharing its counter-terrorism experiences and impart trainings. This is how Pakistan Army has more attention worldwide in defence diplomacy due to its frontline role in War on Terror.
- Defence diplomacy can play an important role to address regional conflicts and reduce tensions, especially with India, Iran & Afghanistan.
- Pakistan continuous contribution towards UN peace keeping missions across the world.

**Threats:**

- Nontraditional threats, such as terrorism and internal conflicts can further strain internal security and economic stability.
- Ongoing regional tensions and unresolved conflicts, particularly with India, continue to pose a threat to Pakistan's security.
- Hostile foreign agencies interventions in security fault lines especially Balochistan, NMDs and Sindh.
- Economic vulnerabilities, currency instability, and inflation can impact Pakistan's ability to allocate sufficient resources for defence.
- Excessive intervention of Military establishment in Political engineering may result in increased reactions from public and cause further unrest

**GAP ANALYSIS - NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY**

Current State	Desired State	Action Steps
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Fragile Economy	Sustainable Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political stability</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Regional and International connectivity</li> <li>• Free Trade Agreements</li> <li>• (SCO, SAARC)</li> </ul>
Political Instability	Strengthening and Continuity of Political system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political consensus</li> <li>• Dialogue</li> <li>• Rule of Law</li> <li>• Freedom of expression</li> </ul>
Regional Hostilities	Regional Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on common interests</li> <li>• Trust building</li> <li>• Trade</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Soft borders</li> </ul>
Current State	Desired State	
Emerging Threats from Non-Traditional Actors	Peace, Stability, Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6-R approach</li> <li>• Re-orientation of security apparatus</li> <li>• Reimagining the society</li> <li>• Reconciliation</li> <li>• Redistribution of resources</li> <li>• Regional approach</li> <li>• Recognize &amp; Tolerate</li> </ul>
Socio-Economic Disparities	Equitable distribution of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National framework</li> <li>• Employment opportunities</li> <li>• Encouraging Entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Addressing genuine grievances</li> </ul>
Youth bulge and Unemployment	Skilled and Technical Manpower Export	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and skill imparting</li> <li>• Bilateral frameworks with international partners</li> </ul>

**STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS**

Sr.	Stakeholder	Role	Analysis	Plan	Action
1.	Pakistan Military	Protection and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak border protection</li> <li>• Infiltration of Non-state actors</li> <li>• Terrorism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geo-economics to enable strong strategic response</li> <li>• Holistic approach to challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up-gradation of technology</li> <li>• Aerial surveillance</li> <li>• Enhancing joint border management system</li> </ul>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Jointness of response</li> </ul>	
2.	MOFA	Regional and International Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low Engagement with India and Afghanistan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts for regional peace</li> <li>• Regional connectivity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced role of UN to revitalize</li> <li>• Kashmir</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-effective role in Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Block structure representation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <input type="checkbox"/> Promotion of National interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• issue</li> <li>• Involvement of strong allies for conflict resolution</li> <li>• Resolution of issues related to terrorism and</li> <li>• infiltration with Afghanistan</li> </ul>
3.	MOI	Internal security and citizen protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organized crimes</li> <li>• Subnationalism</li> <li>• Terrorism</li> <li>• Religious extremism</li> <li>• Sectarianism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countering financing of terrorism</li> <li>• Countering violent extremism</li> <li>• Legal reforms</li> <li>• Reconciliation</li> <li>• Promotion of tolerant and pluralistic society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National narrative building against extremism</li> <li>• Madaris reforms</li> <li>• Illegal foreigners repatriation</li> </ul>
4.	Neighbouring Countries	Engagement under new regional and connectivity corridors for economic and political goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hostile or unfriendly bilateral</li> <li>• Relations to</li> <li>• Border incursions</li> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Subversion and sabotage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of friendly relations</li> <li>• Developing mutual economic stakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBBs</li> <li>• Engagement under Int. Frameworks</li> <li>• Conflicts Resolution reforms</li> <li>• Common grounds of regional groups such</li> </ul>

			incidents		as SCO, SAARC and • ECO
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**INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS OF MILITARY STRATEGY**

S.No.	Institution	Role in implementation	Outcome
a.	Military	Overarching and parenting role	Leading from the front and coordination against the traditional and Non Traditional threats
b.	MOI / Paramilitary Forces	Countering cross border infiltration and response to emergency situation (Internal Security Duties)	Successful neutralization of ethno-political threats in urban centers and provincial conflict zones
c.	Provincial Home Deptts	Specialized CTDs for combating terrorism Specialized police force for tackling hostage situation etc.	Successful neutralization of terrorists elements, drying up sources of terrorist recruitments and finances
d.	Intelligence Agencies	Neutralization of external and internal threats Threat forecast	IBOs with LEAs against non-state actors Security assessment of vital installations

**CHALLENGES**

- **Defence related**
  - Budget constraints
  - Modernization of equipment and induction of latest technology
  - Training and capacity building of human resource
- **Border Security**
  - Porous Border
  - Cross border hideouts of militants and continued infiltrations
  - Transnational smuggling of currency, goods and human trafficking □ Illegal migration
- **Counter Terrorism**
  - Resurgence of terrorist outfits
  - Recruitment, financing and local facilitation
  - Rising extremism, sectarianism and religious intolerance
  - Lack of national consensus / national narrative

- *International Outreach*
  - Prevailing Regional hostility
  - Rising Indian Influence and hegemonic designs to malign Pakistan soft image
  - Cold shoulder of allies of War against Terror after US Withdrawal from Afghanistan
  - Problem in implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir Issue due to lack of interest of international community
  - Rising diplomatic gulf with Afghanistan due continued cross border attacks, trust deficits and international pressure

## **CONCLUSION**

Sandwiched between India and Afghanistan, Pakistan's Security perceptions have largely been influenced by its state of relationship with India and Afghanistan superimposed with its relationship with US. In short Pakistan is confronted with triple threat scenarios which define the contours Pakistan National Security and Military Strategies:

- The perennial conventional and non-conventional threat from India.
- Emerging Traditional/non-traditional threats from Afghanistan with its genesis embedded over the difference on Pak-Afghan border and poor diplomatic relations accentuated through Indian interference.
- The internal threat from highly volatile domestic situation with external linkages.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### *i. CPEC for Economic development and redressal of economic disparity*

Foreign policy is a reflection of a nation's internal situation and economic strengths, so in the Geo-economic paradigm, Pakistan should focus on CPEC and its implementation as both medium and long term steps to stabilize economy, with focus on projects of prime national interest (Railway connectivity).

### *ii. Regional Geo-Economic Connectivity*

Pakistan needs to realign its foreign policy to regional economic connectivity through a multilateral effort such as Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). The organization with its secretariat in Tehran is dormant due to US and International sanctions on Iran.

### *iii. Outreach for new Geo-Economic Forums*

The Foreign Office should broaden its vision with focus on new forums when they are in the infancy and open for new members. Their future role in the international system can be utilized for geo-economic and geo-political outreach with like-minded friendly countries.

### *iv. Management of regional strategic constraints*

To minimize cross border threats to internal security, the immediate neighbors should be given strategic priority for enhancing peace efforts, conflict resolution through diplomacy, trade connectivity and CBMs.

v. *Dialogue and Engagement*

State should engage sub-nationalists, rights movements' activists via dialogue to address its concerns through reconciliation. The rising wave of militancy in NMDs needs an innovative CT strategy and support of civil rights movement.

vi. *Landmines Clearance*

Landmines issue still persists in NW and SW; the state needs to expedite clearing the landmines as hundreds of locals became victim of landmines every year in NMDs. The local community made may engaged to identify the landmines and a reward mechanism may be introduced for those who identify the landmines. By engaging local community members may also restore trust of the locals over state efforts.

vii. *Resolving the Missing Persons Issue*

Government should formulate a strategy in consultation with all stake-holders to address the issue of missing persons. Government should also highlight the progress made in the recovery of missing persons, so far. A number of militants who are absconding in Afghanistan are being registered as missing persons by their families. The state needs to make public those missing person's cases who are absconders in Afghanistan.

viii. *Socio-Economic Mainstreaming of NMDs and Balochistan: State should expedite*

Developmental projects in NMDs, should funnel share specified in NFC for addressing the disparities and mainstreaming of NMDs and Balochistan. The development and revival of economic opportunities in NMDs may engage youth and locals in positive state building activities instead of resorting to militancy or civil rights movements.

ix. *Specialized teams for Unconventional CT*

Enhance training for security forces, focusing on modern warfare techniques and guerilla warfare strategies. Equip intelligence agencies with advanced training and technical resources to stay ahead of evolving threats. There is also need to think out of the box to counter asymmetric war. In this regard specialized teams be constituted to go beyond borders to target central leadership of militant organization.

x. *Up gradation of weapons and equipment of LEAs:*

Utilize drone technology for aerial surveillance of the porous border, taking inspiration from successful US drone operations. Despite sovereignty concerns, the US drone strikes were very effective in elimination of top leadership of TTP. Modern aerial monitoring is crucial to thwart militant activities.

xi. *Implementation of NAP (CVE & CFT)*

- Pakistan should stress on effective implementation of CVE and CFT. In this regard, modern education reforms be initiated along with Madrassa reforms. Media and religious scholars be involved to counter the narrative of militants. Moreover, a fresh campaign to counter finances of terrorists be initiated with leading role to CTDs and FIA.

- It is imperative that the state should focus on countering extremism in all shades. It is the need of the hour to implement counter violent extremism policy guidelines 2018 by NACTA to dry up pool of recruitment of non-state actors.

*xii. Engagement with Afghan Govt*

Strengthen diplomatic efforts to compel the Afghan Taliban to curtail support for TTP and other militant groups. Despite historical associations, recent developments demand a clear stance. Establish bilateral mechanisms to prevent cross-border terrorism.

*xiii. International support against rising terrorism in Pakistan*

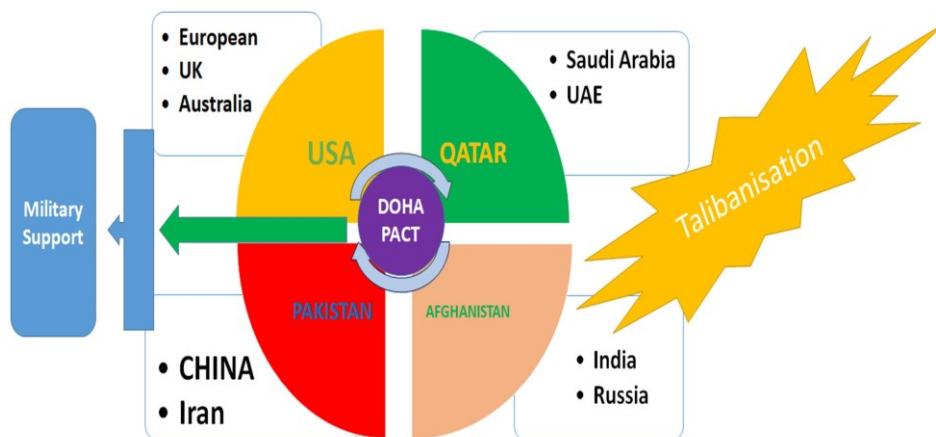
Recognize terrorism as an international issue requiring a collective response. Collaborate with China, emphasizing the threat posed by militant organizations like ETIM, which have strong ties with groups like TTP and BLA. Establish joint mechanisms to counter these transnational threats. Similarly, the US may be engaged to pressurize Afghan government to comply with Doha agreement.

*xiv. Monitoring of cyberspace and social media*

Militants from across the border have considerable digital footprint in the country. The issue be taken with social media owners and effective MoUs be signed to bust their communication and propaganda network. For instance, Umer media of TTP and Al Azaim foundation of ISKP should be blocked. Blocking of social media may also be used as an alternate option if these media houses could not accept our requests.

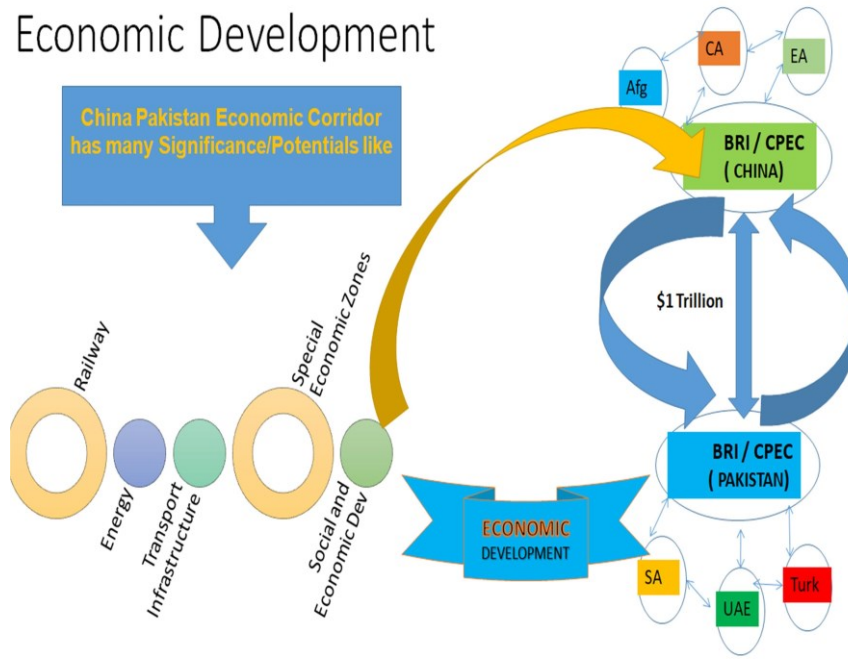
**LOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

International Support against Rising Terrorism





# Economic Development



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