



# THE NEW VISION

Volume 1, Issue III-2023



PAKISTAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

**CONGRATULATIONS  
PAKISTAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
ON ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS  
SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2003**



Georgian Parliament Building (Tbilisi)



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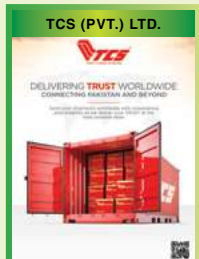
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## About PCFR

### ORIGIN

The genesis of the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) can be traced to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (now renamed as Chicago Council on Global Affairs) which was addressed by former President of Pakistan, General (R) Pervaiz Musharaf (Late), in year 2003. Chicago Council inspired Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, the founder Secretary General and CEO, to form Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations on the same lines. The idea of PCFR was welcomed and appreciated by many former ambassadors, businessmen, intellectuals, academics, and elites of the city. The formation of PCFR was recognized as the need of the time for not only serving the projection of soft image of Pakistan but also for foreign missions based to Pakistan to interact with relevant quarters easily. After long deliberations founding members resolved to form PCFR which is now officially registered institution.

Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) - Karachi based autonomous and non-profit think tank - is devoted to promote conduct of policy oriented research and dialogue on issues related to international relations, economy, foreign policy, global politics, security, culture, and law. PCFR offers a forum for informed discussion on matters of national and international significance particularly those effecting Pakistan. PCFR also strives to reflect national perspective on key national, regional, and international issues through research and interactive dialogue among national and international scholars. PCFR offers findings of its undertakings relevant stakeholders for informed policy and decision making.

### VISION

The Council aims to generate strategic insight on issues of national and international importance through independent and impartial analysis. We envision research and policy inputs for strategic national interests related to foreign relations, global economy, cultural affairs, and sustainable development.

### MISSION

To be an internationally recognized platform for policy research on subjects related to foreign policy, global economy, law, cultural affairs, and sustainable development.

## Objectives

- ★ To provide platform to deliberate on political, economic, legal, social, and cultural issues particularly those affecting Pakistan.
- ★ To undertake research and analysis for deeper understanding of national and international issues.
- ★ To train young researchers and scholars in undertaking target oriented research and invite new ideas.
- ★ To assist government and private organizations in developing policies through policy inputs.
- ★ To serve as a bridge between the foreign missions, based in Islamabad, Karachi, and abroad accredited to Pakistan, and the people of Pakistan.
- ★ To establish mutually beneficial linkages with similar organizations at national and international level for joint undertakings.





**MESSAGES**

## H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi

President  
The Islamic Republic of Pakistan



I am pleased to extend heartiest felicitations to the entire team of the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR), particularly to the Chairman Ambassador Shahid M. Amin, Secretary General & Founder Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, and members on the 20th anniversary of the Council.

It is heartening to learn that over the period of two decades, PCFR's contributions have been instrumental in promoting Pakistan's soft and positive image at the national and international levels. Since its formation in 2003, PCFR has organized a number of important events on a wide range of subjects and invited foreign dignitaries, government officials, intellectuals, and researchers to share their valuable thoughts. I had the honor of participating in some of the events organized by PCFR.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, it is crucial for countries to engage in meaningful dialogue and cooperation to address the challenges we face. From climate change and global health crises to economic instability and security threats, no country can tackle these issues alone. It is only through collaborative efforts that we can achieve sustainable solutions that benefit everyone.

In Pakistan, we recognize the importance of strong diplomatic relations with our neighbours and countries around the world. We are committed to promoting peace, stability, and prosperity through mutual respect and understanding. Pakistan's foreign policy is guided by the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. We believe in respecting the diversity of cultures and religions, and in promoting tolerance and harmony among nations.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) for developing vital linkages with prominent foreign think tanks through the untiring efforts of Mr. Zubairi, which have contributed to promoting Pakistan's viewpoint on a number of issues particularly those affecting Pakistan. Moreover, the articles on important subjects included in the magazine "The New Vision" have also helped to educate the readers on subjects of national and international significance.

I hope PCFR will continue making its valuable contribution toward identifying, articulating, and evaluating various issues of national concern and promoting Pakistan's image abroad.

I wish PCFR every success in its future endeavors.

## H.E. Mr. Syed Tariq Fatemi

SAPM (Coordination) Government of Pakistan  
Prime Minister's Office of SAPM (Coordination)



Greetings! I am honored to have been asked to write an introductory message for this esteemed magazine "The New Vision" by Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations.

As a former Ambassador, currently serving the Government of Pakistan as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Coordination, I fully appreciate the importance of engaging in constructive exchanges and debates that generate ideas/thought-provoking analysis of policy issues. This, in turn, facilitates sound decision-making in both the domestic domain and the global context.

The international system remains in a state of flux. The world continues to be confronted that by the fallout of international conflicts, the economic impacts of supply chain disruption during COVID-19, especially for developing countries like Pakistan, the disastrous consequences of climate change, and disparity between and within countries. These are all deeply worrying developments, more so as our region is deeply impacted by rising hostility and belligerence that require measured and calibrated foreign policy initiatives and responses. In my own time, I have seen firsthand, both the transformative power of diplomacy, as well as the devastating consequences when the world failed to accord due importance to dialogue and deliberation.

I trust that your magazine will offer an excellent platform for such meaningful debate, which aims to address the policy-making challenges we face today. I am confident that readers of this magazine will benefit from the discourse and make valuable contributions to the debate around issues of import and concern for policymakers that would help build a better future for all.

## H.E. Dr. Asad M. Khan

Foreign Secretary  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan



I am delighted to learn that the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) is issuing fresh edition of its magazine "The New Vision".

Publication of this magazine coincides with significant events and major developments taking place regionally as well as globally. For a country like Pakistan with its geo-strategic location as well as unprecedented challenges in the sphere of economy and climate change, calibrating its Foreign Policy in rapidly changing situation requires regular monitoring and analyses by the independent think-tanks.

In contemporary times, the role of think-tanks like PCFR as an analyst of foreign policy and global affairs cannot be overemphasized. The studies, research and analyses conducted by such organizations provide an in-depth understanding and an academic perspective of vital strategic issues. I hope this edition of "The New Vision" will be an important academic resource for students and practitioners of international relations alike.

On this occasion, I wish to congratulate Ambassador Shahid M. Amin, Chairman Board of Governors PCFR, and his team and extend my sincere wishes for their success in all their future endeavours.

**H.E. Mr. Muhammad Kamran Khan Tessori**

Governor of Sindh



It is a matter of immense pleasure that the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) is going to publish another edition of its magazine "The New Vision". I am confident that it will be of immense value and present broader features of our foreign relations in the regional and global context.

Pakistan, owing to its unique strategic location, is of paramount importance on the world stage. We have always endeavoured to develop friendly relations with all the countries and particularly with our immediate neighbours, which is the foremost principle of our foreign policy.

I believe that the credible think tanks are of great salience for forming a balance foreign policy in the existing complex situations and swift changes taking place in the world. Undoubtedly, the PCFR - a composition of eminent people is playing a key role for the purpose. It has proved its existence and attained an important position by organizing a number of seminars and interactive sessions on the diverse subjects. I am glad that continuing its tradition, PCFR is once again publishing the new edition of "The New Vision" which always beautifully showcases the penned articles of distinguished authors on international relations, politics, economy and alike topics on national importance.

I wish PCFR to achieve more milestones and accomplishments ahead.

## H.E. Mr. Syed Murad Ali Shah

Chief Minister, Sindh



I am pleased to congratulate team of Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) on completing 20 years of successful journey since its formation in 2003. Over the course of two decades PCFR team particularly the Founder and Secretary General Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi has played vital role in promoting Pakistan's interests across various sections of the society mainly the diplomatic missions based in Islamabad, Karachi, and abroad accredited to Pakistan.

The efforts of Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations not only promote country's moderate and progressive image but also serves as a bridge between the business community of Pakistan and foreign missions accredited to Pakistan. PCFR has established mutually beneficial linkages with leading think-tanks across the globe. Most recently PCFR has also organized a number of thought provoking sessions on subjects related to Economic, Foreign Policy, and Legal issues where experts were invited to share their expert opinions.

I believe the role of organization like PCFR has been instrumental amid rapidly changing social, political, and economic situations at national and international level. I am confident that PCFR with its panel of experts will continue to contribute to the informed policy making process through its efforts. On the part of Sindh Government, I assure PCFR of our best possible support and cooperation in its future endeavors.

## H.E. Mr. Gustavo Machín Gómez

Director General  
General Division of Political Planning  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Cuba  
Former Ambassador of Cuba to Pakistan



Dear Member of the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR)

It is a pleasure for me, that in my capacity as Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Pakistan, I had the opportunity to address a conference organized by PCFR and hold an exchange with its members, to extend sincere congratulations to entire team of PCFR for 20th anniversary of its formation.

I remember that it was a fruitful exchange for everyone present, including me, in an atmosphere of respect, interest and recognition. We addressed many global and bilateral issues at that time, which are renewed and remain valid.

Undoubtedly, we must be guided by the defense of peace and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as respect for the principles and norms of International Law and the United Nations Charter. The world we live in today needs a lot of this and everyone's effort to solve the serious problems and challenges we face.

Once again, receive my congratulations and my best wishes for you to continue in this important work related to international relations.

## H. E. Dr. Brahim Romani

Ambassador of Algeria to Pakistan



I am pleased to learn that the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its formation this year. On this great occasion I would like to offer our warmest congratulations and best wishes, and to record a certificate of acknowledgment and appreciation for this esteemed Council that works towards a strategic vision of issues related to foreign policy, the global economy, law, cultural affairs, and sustainable development.

We highly value organization like PCFR which serve as a bridge between the foreign diplomatic missions and the members of business community, academia, and civil society. This connection helps to strengthen the relations of friendship and cooperation that enriches mutual interests and common benefits between Pakistan and other countries.

I take this opportunity to highlight my interaction with PCFR on my first visit to Karachi, economic capital of Pakistan and stores glorious memories of Pakistan's solidarity with the great Algerian revolution, in December 2022. The visit offered me a great opportunity to meet my dear brother Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Secretary-General and Founder of the Council and discover the Council having a number of distinguished former ambassadors, business community, diplomats and brilliant advocates.

During this beautiful visit, I was warmly welcomed and deeply supported by Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, who organized for me in his residence an excellent meeting with an elite members of council, businessmen, diplomats and prominent media figures and we exchanged views on opportunities for bilateral trade, economic cooperation, partnership and investment.

In parallel with the celebration of PCFR's 20th anniversary of its founding, Algeria and Pakistan also celebrate this year the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries; a happy double occasion, in which I hope that we work together to consolidate brotherly relations and to promote the exchange and cooperation in various fields for the benefit and development of our two countries.

I once again congratulate the Council on its 20th anniversary, a bright step on a track full of numerous valuable activities. Many Congratulations to Chairman of the Council, H. E. Ambassador Shahid M. Amin, Secretary General Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi and its respected members for their commendable contributions in serving the objectives of the Council.

I wish the esteemed Council continuous success and further progress and prosperity to the brotherly Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Also, I wish to Algeria and Pakistan relation's more enhanced and developed.



## Mian Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri

Former Foreign Minister of Pakistan  
Co-Chief Patron PCFR



I am pleased to extend heartiest felicitations to the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) particularly Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General on publishing special edition of the magazine "The New Vision" on 20th anniversary of Council's formation. Since its formations PCFR has been contributing to educating people of Pakistan on a number of critical national and international issues particularly those effecting Pakistan.

I take this opportunity to highlight that PCFR, with the patronage of important personalities like former ambassadors, prominent businessmen, serving and retired government officials, and elite of the city, has served as bridge between Pakistani community and the diplomatic corps based in Islamabad and Karachi. I am hopeful that PCFR will continue to play its pivotal role towards advancing Pakistan's national interests at the national and international level.

It is worth noticing that global and regional dynamics are undergoing a rapid change characterized by the crisscross of geo-economics and geo-politics. The evolving competition between the existing and emerging powers has unveiled a number of foreign policy challenges for countries like Pakistan with struggling economic, political, and security vulnerabilities. In view of this, I am confident that the latest edition of "The New Vision" will focus on content that will enlighten the readers on the changing global dynamics and evolving challenges and opportunities for Pakistan's economy and foreign relations.

I once again congratulate the entire team of the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) on the successful completion of 20 years since its formation. I wish the entire team the best of luck for its future endeavors.

## Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib

Chairman  
Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations



I am pleased to welcome all the readers to the latest edition of “The New Vision” which marks the 20 years’ successful journey of the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR). Since its formation, the Council has been educating the people of Pakistan on a variety of issues related to international relations, diplomacy, trade, economy, law, and cultural affairs. During its incumbency, prominent foreign diplomats, business experts, and scholars of international stature were invited to share their thought-provoking ideas with our members.

Over two decades, PCFR remained determined to facilitate the connection of Pakistan’s business community, academia, and civil society with the foreign diplomatic missions based in Pakistan and abroad accredited to Pakistan. This has helped to promote mutually beneficial relationships between Pakistan and other countries. In its efforts to share knowledge and expertise, PCFR has also been forward looking for developing linkages with national and international think tanks through signing MoUs. The most recent achievement in this respect is the signing of MoU between PCFR and the Centre for Analysis of Economic Reforms and Communication (CAERC), Azerbaijan.

The last one year has seen many important developments across the globe. The major developments like great power competition, the lingering Ukraine-Russia War, the Iran-Saudi Arab rapprochement, the latest developments Palestine-Israel conflict, soaring global inflation, and climate change have unveiled a plethora of renewed challenges and opportunities for the comity of nations. In these evolving global dynamics countries like Pakistan can hardly escape the consequences.

This issue of “The New Vision” carry important articles and commentaries by the former Chief Justice of Pakistan, former ambassadors, and senior defense analyst that will be instrumental in educating readers. I am convinced that these contributions will generate new ideas for better decision-making at all levels. I have no doubt that PCFR will continue to play its part in the future as well.

## Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi

Secretary General / CEO  
Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations



It is matter of great pleasure to announce the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) is launching latest edition of its magazine “The New Vision” which coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Council. Over the period of two decades, the Council has been very active in promoting soft and positive image of Pakistan at national and international level. The Council organized important events where national and international speakers were invited to share their learned insight on the subjects of national and global significance.

PCFR is committed to serve the people of Pakistan by offering them a forum for generating informed discussion on the subject particularly those affecting Pakistan. Moreover, the council is determined to serve as a bridge between Pakistani community and foreign diplomatic missions based in Islamabad and foreign countries accredited to Pakistan, and consular corps based in Karachi.

I am pleased to highlight that the like the previous editions of “The New Vision”, this issue bears messages of important personalities, articles on critical topics, and glimpses of our events organized over the last one year. The issue also covers the highlights of visit of PCFR’s delegation to the Islamic Republic of Iran and our Youth Access Program where we engaged youth to train them in diplomatic and international affairs.

I take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to intellectuals who have contributed their articles that not only reflect their learned insight on different subject but also enhance the academic value of this publication. I firmly believe that the worthy support of these learned people will be instrumental for further consolidating and refining the research undertakings of this organization. Moreover, PCFR is also grateful all the members for unwavering cooperation and patronage they have extended that enabled us to undertake our activities.

# OBITUARY

1936-2023



## **AMBASSADOR (RETD) SHAHID M AMIN**

FOUNDING CHAIRMAN  
PAKISTAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ambassador Shahid M Amin (Late) was a veteran Pakistani diplomat who served in Pakistan's Foreign Services for 39 years and represented the country as ambassador in Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, France, Libya, and Nigeria. Concurrently Late Ambassador Amin also represented Pakistan as non-resident Ambassador in a number other countries. Late Ambassador Amin was part of Rann of Kutch arbitration case and for this work, he was honored with Tamgha-e-Quaid-e-Azam.

Since retirement from Foreign Service, Ambassador Amin remained committed to sharing his experience and knowledge on national international relations, foreign policy, and national affairs through his books, extensive contributions in newspapers, addressing to seminars, and analysis on national television. He also taught students of international relations in Institute of Business Management (IoBM).

Ambassador Shahid M Amin constantly remained a great support and guiding light for Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) as he was the founding Chairman of the Council. His ideas and guidance contributed to achieving many milestones for the Council. Due to his association and contributions, Council members will always remember him in great memories.

Ambassador Amin's demise represents an irreparable loss not only for his family and close friends but to the whole society. PCFR family prays that Allah almighty blesses the departed soul in eternal peace and gives his family patience to bear the loss.

WITH HEARTFELT PRAYERS  
**PAKISTAN COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

## FOUNDING MEMBERS & CO-CHIEF PATRONS



**Mr. Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri**  
Co-Chief Patron  
Former Foreign Minister of Pakistan



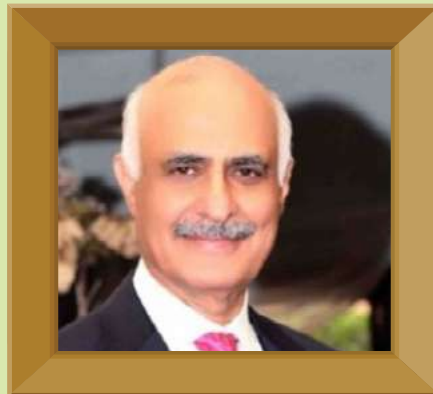
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Former Chief Justice of Pakistan



**Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi**  
Founder & Secretary General



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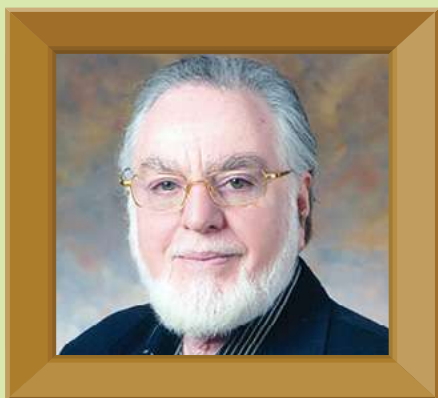
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Advisor PCFR



**Ambassador Jamil Ahmed Khan**  
(Sitara-e-Imtiaz)  
Advisor PCFR





ARTICLES

## SPEECH DELIVERED AT A SEMINAR ON JUSTICE DELAYED JUSTICE DENIED

Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed



The world has seen umpteen number of great thinkers more than one can count. These great thinkers have penned their thoughts and provided the people of the world directions. Today's world has bearing to the thoughts of great thinkers. There has been scientific advancement by drawing from nature's reserve. Advancements are quite profound in art, culture, literature, philosophy, education and in all aspects of human life. The noble profession of law in no way lags behind. Jurists have made great stride and evolved legal theories, legal principles and legal tools for more and more equitable dispensing of justice and making it easily accessible to a large majority of people looking for addressing of their grievances and settlement of their disputes. World is fraught with injustices for the men greed and wickedness has no bound. Abel and Qabel (Cain) were the first two sons of Prophet Adam and Bibi Hawa (Eve). The two siblings were first born on earth. Qabel (Cain) slew his brother Abel. This was the first shedding of blood on earth and also the first case of injustice. Qabel (Cain) after this incident ruined himself and became of those who remain lost. As early as in 1215 Magna Carta containing Charter of Rights was agreed by King John of England Charter 40 of which read as follows: "To no one will we sell, to no will we refuse or delay, right or Justice". Magna Carta played seminal role in later periods in rule of law, Habeas Corpus, Jury Trial, equality before law, Independence of Judiciary and democracy and

representative of government. Now, reverting to the topic of seminar, the initial words are "Justice Delayed Justice Denied" this phrase or expression is very common in judicial sphere and seem to be as old as the Justice System itself. It was repeated by Mr. William E Gladstone the British Prime Minister in the late 1800's.

Justice Delayed Justice Denied is met in judicial sphere by an equally famous phrase "Justice Hurried is Justice Buried". Now what these two phrases mean when they are juxtaposed. Their literal meaning would be simple that Justice has to be done and seen to be done without inexplicable delay. A litigant who comes to the Court for resolution of his dispute wants relief in current time and not in some unforeseeable time where his very interest in the subject matter of dispute gets diluted, becomes inconsequential or even extinguish. Justice delivery is a serious matter. It plays very important role in the socio-economic development of the country and bring harmony in the society and creates certainty. Constitution of Pakistan is based on trichotomy power. The three power centre under constitution of Pakistan is Parliament, Executive and Judiciary. There is no other power centre in the country and none exists. Whole eyes of the people of the country is towards Parliament, Executive and Judiciary for maintaining of balance in the country and driving the country towards attainment of more and better life of the people i.e. the masses.

The Judiciary in Pakistan is under severe stress owing to ever mounting pendency of cases which is also the main cause of delay in decision

of cases. This has not happened overnight nor in one year, five years or ten years. This phenomena of mounting pendency of cases and ultimate delay in decision of cases is as old as the country itself. The Courts on the basis of available resources at its disposal is constantly addressing this chronic issue. Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan was created and National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee was constituted at the highest level with Chief Justice of Pakistan being its Chairman and all the Chief Justices of the High Courts and that of the Federal Shariat Court being its members. The committee has been constantly meeting and deliberating core issues and making policy decision for bringing load of cases down. It succeeded many a times and pendency of cases at all level of the Courts in Pakistan was considerably reduced. But hefty pendency is still there which is one of the cause of stagnation of the society. I do not want to go into minute details or to burden you with figures. Barest one can say is that country has a population of more than 230 million and it is increasing with fast pace. People tendency to approach Courts in Pakistan is not decreasing but increasing. The other two centre of power in the state i.e. Parliament and Executive are under constant challenges of their own survival. These two centre of power has little or no time to address the issues facing the courts and there is also dearth of resources. Not the ideal situation. No cause of despondency Pakistan and its nation has always been resilient. The present will pass. While there are innumerable causes for delay in decision of cases pending in Courts there are equal number of means for their solution. Some of the solutions are dealt here,

1. The first and foremost step is to ensure filling of all vacant posts of Judges in all Courts of Pakistan i.e. the District Judiciary, the High Courts and the Supreme Court of Pakistan. My tenure of Office of Chief Justice of Pakistan was from 21st December, 2019 to 1st February, 2022.

During this period I have ensured that no vacancy is kept in the Supreme Court of Pakistan. A day before I retired there was full strength of Supreme Court Justices that is 17 in all. The Justices of the High Courts were also appointed to ensure minimal vacancies. Appointments in District Judiciaries were also made but whole vacancies could not be filled and the reason assigned by some of the Chief Justices of High Courts at the forum of National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee was that large number candidates either do not fulfill criteria or fail to pass tests and interviews for appointments. They were asked to continue process of appointments in District Judiciaries.

2. There is a tendency of filing of frivolous and false cases in Courts of law. These frivolous and false cases come at par in matter of hearing by Courts with the cases involving rightful disputes having genuine Cause. Until they are decided and dismissed as frivolous and false, most precious time of the Courts is spent in deciding of frivolous and false cases. So far criminal cases are concerned making of false charge with intent to injure is an offence under section 211 of Pakistan Penal Code providing for punishment of imprisonment extending up to two to seven years with fine. Giving of false evidence and fabricating of false evidence are also offenses under section 191 and 192 PPC respectively carrying punishment extending up to seven years imprisonment with fine in case of S. 191 and case of S. 192 punishment extending up to three years and fine. In civil cases while the Court are armed with power to impose cost on a party who has made frivolous or false case at the same time S.210 PPC provides for punishment extending up to two years and fine for obtaining fraudulent decree from Court. There is also provision for filing case by an injured for malicious prosecution. The provisions of the laws are required to be strictly enforced to ensure that frivolous and false cases are not filed.

3. When the date of hearing of the case in fixed and party/advocates been informed, adjournment is not to be granted and if there is justifiable cause for adjournment it has to be on cost. Further the lawyers are required to maintain large firms of lawyers so that lawyer is available for proceeding of the case on date of hearing and adjournment is not sought due to engagement of lawyer before another Court or before other bench of Court.

4. Courts should give timeline for completing hearing of the case. In criminal cases when charge is framed and in civil cases when issues are framed. Similar procedure should be followed on admission of appeals, revisions and reviews. Constitutional matters when they are set down for hearing timeline be given for completing the hearing. There is no prohibition on Courts by law in giving timeline for completing hearing of the cases.

5. Supreme Court in its judgment in the case MFMY Industries Ltd. v. Federation of Pakistan reported in 2015 SCMR 1550 extensively dealt with matters relating to administration of Justice more particularly the aspect of delay in giving of judgments by Courts after completion of hearing. Court relying phrase Justice delayed Justice denied ruled that all Courts in Pakistan on completion of hearing of case should give their Judgments, expeditiously and timeline was given for this purpose. Supreme Court decision is binding on all High Courts, subordinate Courts and all other tribunals and special courts courts under Article 203GG of the Constitution. Since this Judgment, Courts in Pakistan are maintaining timeline in giving their judgments.

Given the increase in population of the Country and large number institution of new cases all over Pakistan, there is need to increase the strength of Judges in the High Courts so also in District Judiciaries. Current strength of Judges is

not sufficient to deal with mounting pendency and ever increasing institution of new cases. Ratio of Judges has to fixed on basis of vis-à-vis population of District in District Judiciary and in High Courts on the basis of population of provinces and Islamabad Capital Territory. It's a matter of calculation. Off the cuff for addressing immediate problem, the strength of District Judiciary in all of Pakistan be increased if not more two times its present strength. High Courts strength be increased doubling the present strength. Of Course this means incurring of considerable expenditure on the part of Government. As James Madison said in Federalist No:51 dealing with structure of Government and providing checks and balances "Justice is the end of Government. It is the end of Civil Society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until it e obtained". The commentators have commented on this saying and given meaning that ultimate purpose of government is to protect the rights of the people by ensuring Justice to those whose rights have been damaged. This being the end of the government to achieve, it matter less what cost is to be incurred. Feel of Justice itself usher development of the country in leaps and bound and prosperity will reach to the people of the Country.

\*Author is former Chief Justice of Pakistan.

## PAKISTAN'S GEOECONOMICS

By Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry



Geoeconomics is a term that was used in the early 1990s to signify the fact that in the post-Cold War period, competition between states would essentially be in the economic domain, rather than military. Accordingly, during the brief but intense phase of globalization and inter-dependence, the world witnessed growing emphasis on economic resources and modern technologies and how these were utilized to elevate a state's stature and potential. China emerged during this period not only as a leading economy but also as a major regional and global power.

Another, perhaps simpler, way to define geoeconomics is the use of a country's geography to maximize its strategic, political and economic advantages. Singapore, Hong Kong, and Dubai are good examples of geoeconomics-in-play, leveraging their geographic location to serve as a transit hub.

Geoeconomics is important, but it is not a substitute of geopolitics, which is a much broader and complex phenomenon. Inter-state competition in the military, information and technological domains has become intense and is influencing the fast-evolving global geopolitics. Multiple non-kinetic warfare tools have also emerged as the preferred mode for states to achieve their strategic goals and dominance. Of that, certainly economic policies and measures are an essential part. In that sense, geoeconomics

may be regarded as a subset of geopolitics.

Notably, geoeconomics works both ways. It enables countries to take advantage of their geography and resources to maximize the welfare of their masses, but it also becomes a coercive tool in the hands of the powerful and wealthy to subdue the opponents. The US economic sanctions against Iran and North Korea are a case in point. Of late, the US is increasingly applying protectionism against Chinese exports to the US and also placing restrictions on several Chinese technology firms and apps. Pakistan too suffered when it was placed on grey list by the Financial Action Task Force, a platform that was used by the US and India to coerce Pakistan into taking action against certain non-state actors.

What does geoeconomics mean for Pakistan? The term assumed limelight in Pakistan's public policy discourse when the first ever National Security Policy (NSP) of the country was announced in January 2022, calling for a comprehensive definition of national security. The NSP stipulated a tripod of traditional (military) security, economic security and human security to be pursued in tandem to make Pakistan and its people secure against internal and external threats. Within the context of economic security, geoeconomics emerged as one tangible, doable and realistic option for Pakistan to achieve its national security.

While there is growing recognition that Pakistan should place greater emphasis on geoeconomics,

it is the traditional security issues which continue to be regarded as critical for the country's national security. The security needs of the country began to dominate policy discourse right after the independence because of the circumstances in which Pakistan was born in 1947. The bigger state from which Pakistan was separated - India - was hostile and reluctant to give Pakistan its share of finances and military stores. The nascent state of Pakistan had no infrastructure and every element of statecraft had to be created from scratch. Three major issues that erupted at that time came to test the nerves of the policy makers: Settling the stream of refugees flowing into the country; Kashmir dispute and war with India in 1948; and stoppage of waters coming into Pakistani canals from the headworks that were located in India. The survival of the State and its security thus assumed paramount consideration and ever since has been central to Pakistan's internal and external policies. Consequently, Pakistan came to be seen in the West and elsewhere as a country which was over-burdened by its immense security problems, dominated by security establishment, and pursuing a foreign policy that is largely India-centric, a country which came to define threat spectrum for Pakistan.

Accordingly, Pakistan spent considerable time, energy and resources to develop formidable conventional forces and nuclear deterrence against any possible aggression from the east. However, the country has lagged behind in economic and social development. There is now a growing realization that if Pakistan wishes to modulate its security-centric approach, a greater emphasis on geoeconomics is the answer.

How should Pakistan bring the much-needed focus on geo-economics and how would this benefit the people of the country?

First, the policy makers need to review the way they look at Pakistan's geographic location,

which has often been described as a troubled or tough neighborhood. Due to wars with India and instability in Afghanistan spilling into Pakistan, many in the country understandably regard the geographic location as a source of instability. The counter-view is provided by geoeconomics, whereby Pakistan's geography is viewed as a source of strength, and not a liability. The economic geography of the region where Pakistan is located makes it a hub of three sub-regions of Asia: South Asia, Central Asia, and Middle East. The combined population is over 2 billion people generating trillions of dollars of wealth and economic activity. The region is energy rich, boasts skilled and young human resource, and has reasonably high levels of industry. Adjacent to this region is China, Pakistan's northern neighbor, with its own large population and an economy second only to the US.

No other country enjoys such a pivotal position that Pakistan does in this enormously resource-rich neighborhood. Once the country changes its lens, and begins to look at its neighborhood as a potential bastion of prosperity and not as a source of instability, Pakistan would be well-poised to benefit from this amazingly rich economic geography. The country can become, for instance, a hub of economic connectivity between the three subregions and China. If Pakistan chooses to move in that direction, it would look at the east-west and north-south connectivity in a new light. The wealth so generated and employment so created would benefit Pakistan and bring prosperity to the people of the country.

On north-south connectivity, there exists a consensus in the country, and a large number of projects have been completed under the ambit of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Gwadar port is being developed as an ideal trans-shipment hub. Ideal, because it is a deep seawater port, with two small bays protected by

a landmass called Hammerhead. East Bay highway is connected to Karachi and an international airport is about to be inaugurated. Gwadar's location in the Arabian Sea opens up to the Indian Ocean without the encumbrances of the Strait of Hormuz. Up in the north, the Karakorum Highway links China's Xinjiang province with Pakistan through Gilgit-Baltistan. The road is now being opened for year-round traffic. After entering China, there are roads going to Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and onward to Eurasian mainland. This north-south connectivity thus has the potential to open up new opportunities for Pakistani ports in the Arabian Sea.

After CPEC's first phase projects in the energy and infrastructure sectors neared completion, the second phase has now begun inviting investments into industry by expediting special economic zones, agriculture to make Pakistan self-sufficient in food, and information technology, where young minds of Pakistanis are currently engaged. Fortunately, there is a broad consensus in Pakistan that a vigorous implementation of CPEC can usher in a whole new phase for the economy of Pakistan.

As for east-west connectivity, India would be keen to trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia. The latter would like to supply their surplus energy to South Asia. If Pakistan were to become a transit country for this two-way mutually beneficial trade, this can usher an era of unprecedented economic activity for the region with Pakistan right at its center. There would, of course, be some security and other concerns, which must be addressed through safeguards built into the treaty arrangements. Pakistan itself is an energy-deficient country, and is spending precious foreign exchange to import oil and gas. From Turkmenistan, gas can flow to Pakistan and India through TAPI (Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan India) project. From Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, highly economical

hydel energy can come to Pakistan through CASA-1000 (Central Asia South Asia) and many other projects that can easily be conceived. All these vistas of cooperation can open up if Pakistan begins to view east-west connectivity from the point of view of geoeconomics.

The second geoeconomics imperative for Pakistan is to have peaceful environment in the region to make it conducive for economic development. There is no doubt that South Asia is facing profound challenges. The US is intensifying its competition with China in multiple domains, and even looking to wean Pakistan away from the CPEC. The US is also deepening its partnership with India, emboldening the latter's hegemonic tendencies and encouraging it to bolster its war fighting capabilities against China. The Kashmir dispute continues to fester, with India embarked on the project of changing its demography. The situation in Afghanistan remains grim ever since the US withdrew its troops in August 2021. The country is at a high risk of destabilization and even civil war. The challenges of a humanitarian crisis, economic hardship, and resurgence of terrorism in Afghanistan are a matter of concern for the whole region.

These are monumental challenges. However, there are also opportunities if Pakistan uses its unique position to become a force of peace and positivity in the region. Pakistan has strong ties of friendship with China and Central Asian Republics, who all wish to link up to Pakistani ports to reach Indian Ocean. Pakistan maintains strong economic and commercial ties with the US and EU, which are Pakistan's large trading partners. Pakistan is also open to policy dialogue with India while maintaining its principled support to the Kashmir cause and opposition to Hindutva-driven Indian hegemony in South Asia. Pakistan should consider opening its trade with India through land borders. Instead of buying expensive goods from far-away lands,

Pakistan's consumers can benefit from cheaper goods from across the border. Likewise, large Indian market can be accessed by Pakistan's traders and investors.

For its part India, too, would benefit enormously if it normalizes relations with Pakistan. Around 2007, when both countries were engaged in a peace process, bilateral trade had gone up over \$3 billion. Studies indicated a much higher potential for Pakistan-India bilateral trade. Likewise, Pakistan should take steps to bolster its trade with Afghanistan. Some years back, the bilateral trade had reached a \$3 billion mark. Pakistan is a preferred market for Afghan traders and conduit for its goods in transit. The Taliban government can benefit significantly if it is persuaded to make the country a transit hub for the region. Trade helps build peace constituencies. These days, every country attaches highest of importance to its economic interests. India, for instance, is purchasing oil from Russia and is trading with China despite its partnership with the US.

The third most promising area of geoeconomics that can work well for Pakistan is the recent rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which has been facilitated by China. Saudi Arabia has been taking steps to diversify its economy and investments across the world. Its Vision 2030 envisages a reduced reliance on oil exports by boosting other sectors. Pakistan could certainly benefit from the opportunities that would become available by Saudi potential investments in Asian countries, including Pakistan. Iran is a neighbor of Pakistan and its border with Pakistan provides ample opportunities to deepen economic ties between the two, especially through expanded border markets, barter trade, and other ways that are not subject to the US economic sanctions against Iran. With economic interactions between China and Iran and Saudi Arabia likely to pick up pace, Pakistan can benefit enormously being right in

the middle. The Gwadar port, in particular, can play a pivotal role.

So, if Pakistan were to view its neighborhood through the lens of geoeconomics, become a hub of connectivity between various subregions of Asia, contribute to creating a peaceful regional environment, and benefit from new opportunities generated by the evolving global and regional geopolitics, Pakistan's policy makers would need to gear up and take a number of actions. One, Pakistan should make its trade and investment regime more attractive. The information should also be propagated widely and through multiple instruments. Two, the government should engage thinktanks and academic institutions to study trade and investment regimes of the regional countries and identify opportunities for the common good of South Asian countries. Free Trade Areas (FTAs) are useful but only if safeguards are instituted to minimize injury to own industry. Three, Pakistan should expedite actions on the projects under CPEC as well as TAPI and CASA-1000. Four, Pakistan must pay urgent attention to non-traditional security threats to the economy, such as climate change, cyber-attacks, water, food, and energy insecurities, and lawfare. Pakistan may also consider establishing task forces to propose result-oriented solutions for countering these non-traditional threats to our economy. The success stories of economic integration in Europe and South East Asia should be studied with a view to evolving practical suggestions for regional integration in South Asia.

Of all the pre-requisites of geoeconomics, nothing is more important than how Pakistan is governed internally. The manifestations of geoeconomics may involve external actors but its dynamics are internal. The first area to focus on is political stability of the country. Experience has shown that those of the developing countries that registered rapid economic growth could do



so only when they had a stable polity. In a multi-party parliamentary form of democracy, differences on public policy and methods to implement those policies are natural. It is a kind of check and balance for the executive. However, when differences are viewed as intractable disputes, and competition becomes hatred, and violent responses to opponents are tolerated by the society, then much of society's energy is consumed by internal squabbles rather than focusing on how it could benefit from its economic geography.

The second imperative is law and order and rule of law. No foreign government or multinational company would want to invest in Pakistan if there is lawlessness and the institutions of the country are too weak to implement a rule-based order. No one should be above the law, including the elite of the country, any vested interests, or any non-state actor engaged in threat or use of force or other illegal activities.

The third imperative is the continuity of economic policies. Each succeeding government must respect the key economic policies of its predecessor so that the investors and traders can have certainty and predictability of their investments.

Fourthly, all loss-making state-owned institutions should be gradually phased out. It is not the business of the State to set up industry. The State should encourage and facilitate the private sector to establish and run industries. An economic domain where subsidies are provided to some is against the spirit of a level playing field.

The fifth suggestion is to avoid an over-emphasis on state-charity and hand-outs, which create a dependency syndrome and is counter-productive in the long term. The objective should be to find ways of empowering each citizen to earn his or her own living. The

schemes such as micro-finance are more important than dishing out free money or goods. The Chinese experience in poverty eradication needs to be studied and emulated. It is remarkable that a country can lift 800 million people out of poverty in such a short span of time. A good starting point for Pakistan is to overhaul the education system, which should provide not only academic degrees but also produce creative, skilled, and responsible citizens.

Sixthly, Pakistan must work on changing its international perception away from extremism and terrorism to our points of strength. Pakistan is endowed with highest of the mountain peaks. A focus on mountain tourism can become a new positive identity of Pakistan. Likewise, the country's archaeological heritage is rich. No land can boast the likes of Gandhara, Mohenjodaro or Mehargarh. Pakistan has also been a bastion of several religions of the world: Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Sufi Islam, and Christianity. There is a modest religious tourism in the country. That can be radically bolstered to generate economic activity. Domestic and foreign tourists would flock to see the treasures that Pakistan has.

Finally, Pakistan needs to mobilize the academics, think tanks, and civil society to create a narrative of peace. The government should galvanize society's debate about the economic dividends of peaceful coexistence with neighbors. The intelligentsia, academia, civil society, and print and electronic media can all play an important role in building a positive brand of Pakistan – a brand that is associated with regional peace, economic security, and human development.

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## THE DIPLOMATIC COUP BY CHINA

By Ambassador M. Alam Brohi



The deal between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran for rapprochement brokered by China has kindled hopes for the security and stability in the Middle East and the contiguous regions. Tired of their long festering confrontationist policies for dominance in the Middle East, and impelled by internal and international political, economic and strategic compulsions, the leaderships of both countries accepted a deal duly guaranteed by an impartial, powerful and mutually trusted state enjoying political and strategic credibility at the international and regional planes, and having, simultaneously, expanding political and economic cooperation with both countries.



The Chinese successful bid to broker the deal between the two antagonist states is rightly considered a diplomatic coup by China, and a setback to the United States' position in the region. It also simultaneously marks China's standing as an international stakeholder in the global affairs. This is bound to exacerbate the US fears that China, through quiet diplomacy and strategic advances,

plans to gradually displace it in the greater Asia. The move, in all probability, would accelerate the ongoing confrontation and competition between the two dominant states.

The moot question is whether KSA and Iran have pragmatically appraised the senselessness of their decades-long confrontational policy and sued for good neighborliness in the Middle East, or is it a tactical move to counterweigh the pressure of the other political, economic and strategic compulsions with a view to gaining time to tide over their internal, regional and international problems before revamping their policies for dominance in the Middle East. Only time will tell us. The Saudi-Iran relations have undergone such cyclical periods since the decolonization of the Arab world.

The Arabs and Persians have been entangled in a cobweb of ethnic biases, religious and ideological prejudices compounded by overlapping political and strategic objectives from the Arabian deserts to the Mediterranean shores since long time. The rivalry triggered by the ignominious defeat of Yazdegerd III, the last Sassanid ruler in the seventh century by Arabs kept aglow the Arab-Persian antagonism for the past thirteen centuries undermining the Muslim world. After the Second World War, however, under the influence of the US, this rivalry lied dormant under the thin surface of good neighborliness until the overthrow of Reza Shah Pahlavi in 1979.

The security situation underwent a drastic change during the Khomeini-led regime fueling the fear of the Arab monarchies for the export of the revolution to their region by the determinant Iranian clergy. The minority Shia populations in Arab countries started looking to Iran as their

spiritual and ideological centre. The Iraq-Iran war in 1982 supported by Arab monarchies, the Iraqi intrusion into Kuwait, the US attack on Iraq in 1990s and 2003, the Arab Spring, and the devastation of Syria, Libya and Yemen in civil wars aided by Arab monarchs changed the entire strategic landscape of the Arab world dividing it into two antagonist camps under the influence of Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Iran fortified its strategic position in at least five Arab countries including Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and the Hamas-ruled Palestine through its strategic presence or its proxy militant organizations such as Hezbollah and Hamas. Iran had learnt a lesson from its earlier war with Iraq to strengthen its own defence resources given the antagonism of the US and its Arab allies. Iran adopted an ambitious "Forward Defence" plan fueling the fears of US and its Arab allies and Israel.

The Iran's 'Forward Defense' plan had many components: to develop indigenous technology and acquire nuclear and missile capability to be used as an umbrella over its other military forces; transform the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards and its Quds militia into a formidable military force; increase their influence with the Shia communities in the Arab countries; recruit and fund proxy militias in the Middle East. Much before the US attack on Iraq in 1990s, Iran began working on its forward defense plan steadfastly enlisting the cooperation of the Arab leaders who were weary of Western interventions in their region and the expansionist designs of Israel. The Shia-Sunni conflict and intra Arab rivalries helped Iran create its sphere of political and strategic influence.

The Hezbollah played a formidable role in Syria against rebels particularly the Free Syrian Army financed by Arab monarchs and trained by another Muslim country to dethrone Bashar ul Asad. The Militia is a power to reckon with in Lebanon and no regime could function there without its support. The Houthis - covertly supported by Iran have withstood the Arab

coalition forces. The Hamas has become a thorn in the body of Egypt and Israel. The Shia Iraq is more alarming for the Sunni regimes in the region.

Apparently, the Iranian strategic position in the Middle East is more securely established than at any point in the past. However, the economic sanctions imposed on it by the Western world, the possible collusion of Israel with Arab countries were probably weighing more heavily on the minds of the Iranian leaders. Similarly, the Saudi ruler Prince Muhammad Bin Salman was disillusioned with the stalemate in Yemen war and needed to turn his focus to his ambitious plan of restructuring the economy and modernizing the society of his conservative kingdom. Thus these political and strategic circumstances compelled both countries to sue for peace or a lull in their antagonism. The deal, however, will remain precariously vulnerable to the past distrust and the historic Arab-Persian hostility.

Notwithstanding all this, the Agreement between the two important countries of the region is a good omen for peace and security in the greater Middle East. Both countries will have to take strident confidence building measures to sustain the deal because they have overlapping and mostly conflicting political, economic and strategic interests in the region. The Saudi policy for dominance in the region was earlier resisted by Arab nationalist leaders including Gamal Abdul Nasser, Hafiz ul Asad, Saddam Hussain and Moammar Qadhafi. Yemen with its Aden seaport and the sizeable active Shia population of Yemen descent in Saudi Kingdom's Najd region has always been prioritized in the Saudi strategic policy. The Aden seaport accounts for 80% of the Saudi Arab's outbound oil trade.

How the Houthi militia will be accommodated in any power sharing formula, and will Saudi leadership accept Bashar ul Asad, earlier a *bête noire*, as the legitimate leader of Syria? The Syrian leader recently visited UAE. Will Iran abandon or slow down its quest for nuclear capability being the most sensitive issue of concern for Saudi Arabia

and Israel? Will Israel sit back and see an expanding relationship between the two countries without throwing any spanner? These are some crucial questions that weigh on the mind of the Middle East experts.

Pakistan has significant stakes in peace and security in the Middle East and South West Asia given its vital political, economic and strategic interests. Until recently, Pakistan faced an ominous sectarian war widely suspected to be funded by two Muslim countries. We could never be able to have friction-free relations with Iran after the clergy revolution. We were allies of the US and Saudi Arabia in the first Afghanistan war while the US was entangled in bitter hostility with Iran. Even after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops and the US from Afghanistan, our relations with this important neighbour remained hostage to lingering suspicions created by our earlier strategic alliance with the US and Saudi Arabia.

Our support to the Taliban in 1990s and their hostility towards a particular ethnic and sectarian segment of the Afghan population; the brutal murder of the Iranian diplomats in Mazar-e-Sharif; the subversive activities of Jundullah allegedly carried out from across the border kept fueling the Iranian distrust of our commitment to good neighborliness. The strategic conflict between KSA and Iran in the wake of Arab Spring and later the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between US and Iran; the substantive presence of India in Afghanistan and Iran; our obvious tilt to Saudi Arabia throughout all these years hindered our efforts to improve bilateral relation with Iran.

There are also fears, and legitimate ones, that since the US is fully focused on the Russian-Ukrainian war, it may outsource the containment of China in the greater Middle East to India designing and putting in place a regional alliance like the QUAD and AUKUS which have been doing its bidding in the Indo-Pacific region. This is possible given the strategic objectives of India in the Arabian Sea. The strategic controlling of the Arabian Sea lanes has

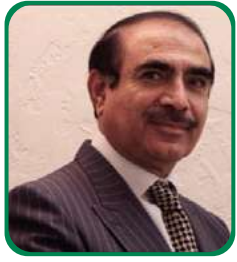
been the long standing objective of India. Jawaharlal Nehru wanted a greater confederation of the greater Asian countries with India at the steering to replace the British Empire.

We have a difficult and delicate foreign policy task ahead. Our path is strewn with thorns given the misunderstandings of the past and the new challenges thrown to our way by the fast changing geo-political and strategic dynamics. Given the political deadlock; the economic meltdown; the mounting terrorist attacks on the country's physical security and the lack of synergy between the state institutions, these challenges seem formidable. We feel besieged from within. We have to break this siege.

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## UKRAINE WAR- THE COLLAPSE OF THE WORLD ORDER

By Ambassador G R. Baluch



The Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24th February 2022 was thought to last for few weeks; to perhaps few months; however, the conflict has defied all predictions by political pundits and military analysts alike. The bloody war in Ukraine rages on inflicting tragic loss of precious human lives; to both the parties to the conflict. As per the estimates of a US general the Ukraine and Russia would have suffered at least 100000.00 Military casualties each, including wounded and killed till 2022. There have been reports of thousands of civilian casualties particularly on Ukrainian side as a result of Russian indiscriminate targeting of civilian neighborhoods as well as civilian infrastructure and Government installations. Russian unrelenting bombardment of Ukrainian civilian infrastructure has decimated, energy grid stations, communication installations, dams, bridges and industrial complexes. President Putin's "Special Operations" according to several military analysts turned into Putin's "Leningrad", as the Russian Columns of hundreds of tanks, APCs and support vehicles which laid the Siege to the Ukrainian capital Kiev, were destroyed and turned into junk by Ukrainian guerrilla troop detachments along the roads and arteries leading to Kyiv. As per estimates Russia has lost over 2000 tanks which constitute half of its operational inventory of tanks. Looking at the military asymmetry between Russia and Ukraine; the Western Powers offered a safe escape to the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. President Zelenskyy a comedian

turned politicians surprised his friends and foes alike, when he declined western offer of safe escape and said "I need ammunition and not a ride". Using his media skills; he took his self in the Kyiv city center and declared "I am here, we are not putting down arms, we will be defending our country, because our weapon is truth, and our truth is that this is our land, our children, and we will defend all of this". One year on; he proved his pledge with deeds; albeit at high price of loss of human lives and almost decimation of the entire civil infrastructure of his country by Russian Artillery, Missile and drone fire. He has come to symbolize as a War Time leader; who has not only galvanized his people but has successfully marshaled a formidable International diplomatic, financial and military support for the defense of his country. He has demonstrated an unprecedented courage to stay amongst his countrymen with his two children and wife in the war zone in the face of unrelenting Artillery missile and Drone attacks by Russia. He has indeed set a very high bar for the leadership of a country under siege by a formidable adversary.

It appeared an unequal contest between Mr. Zelenskyy and Mr. Putin. Mr. Putin a world statesman; who has been at the helm of affairs of Russian Republic for over two decades. He has built almost a cult like following in the Russian official and public spheres, on the one hand and the other, globally he has created image of an exceptional World statesman with extraordinary acumen of state craft as well as interstate relations in Peace and War alike. Zelenskyy a comedian turned public figure and a war hero for his beleaguered countrymen. As a country; Ukraine can simply not match the

overall national power of Russia, with the biggest geographical area, three times the population of Ukraine. Russia sits on one of the largest Gas and petroleum deposits of the world, prides as the 3rd largest army in the world, biggest nuclear arsenal and an international diplomatic clout as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and with huge financial resources of its own. However, despite all his preponderance of power compared to Ukraine; President Putin's personal Talisman came crashing down at home and abroad in the face of a youthful and brave leadership in the person of President Zelenskyy of course buoyed by Western Military, Financial and Diplomatic Support.

President Putin committed major Geopolitical miscalculations after the other, costing his country loss of hundreds of thousands of precious human lives, Billions of loss of oil and gas revenue, loss of military equipment and most gravely he lost his personal image as a Global statesman who could play politics with finesse on the world Geo-Political Chessboard. Putin by embarking on his devastating military adventure against Ukraine; has helped NATO reemerge from what French President in 2019 called "braindead", while the then US President Trump was quoted by several senior State department that in 2018 President Trump wanted the US pull out from NATO (since the NATO had outlived its utility).

He had forged friendly and cordial relations with the major European leaders which led the entire West European Continent dependence on Russian energy sources, thereby achieving an enormous Geo -Economic leverage in the European Sub continent. He grossly miscalculated Western European ability to take the risk of stoppage of gas and Petroleum Russia. The Russian cut the supply of gas and Petroleum has spurred the technology savvy Western economies have expedited the development and use of alternate energy, which would free them

of dependence on Russian energy in the long term.

The war in Ukraine has exposed lack of military planning, logistics, coordination, low morale and uninspiring leadership of the Russian Army. So bad is the rot in the Russian Army that Putin had to outsource its military operation on the eastern war front to Private Mercenaries Wagner under notorious Evgeny Prigozhin which conscripted Russian Prisoners to fill up its rank and file. The Russian setback on the battle field also exposed the antiquated Russian weapon systems which would impact its future Arms exports in the world. Russia at one point was the second largest arms exporter in the world. India was its largest customer which bought 23% of its weapons for US \$ 6.5 billion in the last 5 years.

While Putin's narrative holds ground on account of unbridled NATO expansion. Nonetheless, in his quest to challenge NATO eastward expansion, which he considers an attempt by the Western Powers led by the US to impose a new Geo -Strategic Balance of Power in Europe poses existential threat to Russia. However, Putin's response to this" existential threat" was a botched 'Special Military Operation" against a smaller European neighbor, rather than using his enormous Geo -strategic, Geo economic and diplomatic leverage as a Global Power.

One of the justifications advanced by Moscow for its invasion of Ukraine has been a reference to some vague western Commitment in 1991 to Gorbachev that NATO will not be expended further east given by the then Secretary of state James Baker's famous "not one inch eastward" in his meeting with the erstwhile Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990 during the German unification process. However, this verbal commitment was not reduced to writing in any agreement. NATO continued to expand Eastward, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic Bulgaria (1999), Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (2004), Albania

and Croatia (2009), Montenegro (2017) and North Macedonia (2020). His invasion of Ukraine has only added urgency to other smaller European countries to NATO security umbrella. Most recently Finland and Sweden the two Neutral countries in the cold war era have applied for membership of NATO and are very close to signing the agreement with NATO.

The east word expansion of NATO demonstrated opportunism on the part of the western powers, which wanted European Security architecture; completely dominated by NATO while disregarding genuine security concerns of the Russian Republic, the successor to the erstwhile USSR.

The east word expansion of NATO is strategically flawed on several counts; one; the war in Ukraine has demonstrated that unilateral approach to building a stable, and sustainable security architecture in Europe is not sustainable. Second; The premise of Western preponderance; runs counter to building a Multipolar world, which would be more peaceful, interdependent and sustainable to counter the mounting global challenges, including local conflicts, the threats posed by non-state actors, global warming, Food Security, Water Security, food Security and increasing health hazards due pandemics as well as other Natural disasters.

Putin's Strategic miscalculations provided the Western Powers to come all guns blazing in support of Ukraine. NATO led by the US has provided Ukraine military equipment and other assistance worth over 100 Billion Dollars, while the cost of the promised Tanks from UK, Germany and the US are not counted. NATO has not allowed Ukraine to consider a ceasefire leading to peaceful settlement since, Ukraine is practically being bankrolled by the NATO countries. There would be implications for Ukraine in the long term, since the war debits have to be paid back. It would take hundreds of

billions of dollars and many years to rebuild the Ukrainian civil infrastructure pulverized by the intense and indiscriminate artillery and Missile bombardment by Russia. Ukraine will have to live with a hostile Russia with security serious implications.

Europe got the maximum peace dividend as a result of the end of the cold war. The European economies thrived in the post-cold war era. A year of war in Ukraine is fast reversing the EU economic gains, as energy cost spiral out of control and inflation in most EU countries runs in double digits.

China which has been forging closing relations with Russia with the announcement of "Friendship without bounds" has been trading a rather cautious stance by way of observing UN sanctions regime against Russia and not providing lethal support to Russia so far. However, if it becomes clear to Beijing that the NATO led by the USA is using Ukrainian to impose Pax Americana in the world, in that case China could join Russia in confronting what Putin has termed as Western Hegemony of the world. The world could descend into another more lethal Global Power Confrontation, which could even pale the cold war era confrontation and further deepen political polarization and economic costs to the world as a whole. Given Putin's repeated threats to use all military means (a veiled reference Russian Nuclear weapons) to confront what he calls "an existential threat to Russia. There has been reports that Russia might use Tactical Nuclear weapons if Ukraine forces try take back Crimea and other eastern areas which have been annexed by Russia. Unless all the Global Big Powers step back the world seems to be at the cusp of a most disastrous Military and economic disaster.

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## WHY ARE PAKISTAN'S FORTUNES RUNNING IN CIRCLES? WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

By Brigadier (R) Haris Nawaz



Pakistan is a country that has always played a significant geopolitical role in the region due to its location, size, and historical context. Despite facing numerous challenges, Pakistan needs to take its geopolitical role very seriously, as it is critical to maintain peace and stability in the region. Pakistan, a South Asian country with a population of over 230 million, has had a tumultuous history marked by military coups, political instability, and regional conflicts. The nation's strategic location, bordering India, China, Iran, and Afghanistan, has made it an influential player in the region. However, its entanglement in regional politics has often hampered its potential for economic growth. This Paper will explore whether isolating itself from regional politics and concentrating on building its economic muscles would be beneficial for Pakistan.

Pakistan's geopolitical importance stems from its strategic location, sharing borders with Afghanistan, Iran, China, and India. The country has also been a crucial transit point for trade routes throughout history, connecting Central Asia with South Asia and the Middle East. This unique location provides Pakistan with an opportunity to play a key role in regional politics and diplomacy.

However, Pakistan's economic woes and internal political instability have prevented the country from realizing its full potential in the region. The country has been grappling with economic challenges, such as high inflation, low foreign exchange reserves, and a large trade deficit. These economic woes have hindered Pakistan's ability to

make significant contributions to regional development and diplomacy.

Moreover, the country's political instability has been a major obstacle to its geopolitical role. This instability has created a perception of uncertainty and unpredictability in the region, undermining Pakistan's credibility as a reliable partner in regional affairs. Despite these challenges, Pakistan needs to take its geopolitical role seriously, as it has the potential to play a critical role in regional stability and development. To achieve this goal, Pakistan needs to focus on several key areas.

Firstly, Pakistan needs to prioritize economic development and stability. Economic stability is a fundamental prerequisite for Pakistan's ability to play a meaningful role in regional affairs. The government must take measures to stabilize the economy, reduce inflation, increase Foreign Exchange Reserves, and address the Trade Deficit. Economic stability will not only benefit Pakistan's population but also enhance its credibility as a reliable partner in regional affairs.

Secondly, Pakistan needs to address its Internal Political Instability. A stable and predictable political environment is essential for Pakistan to build credibility and trust with its neighbours. The government must take measures to strengthen democratic institutions, ensure political stability, and address the underlying causes of civil unrest. This will help create a conducive environment for Pakistan to engage a regional diplomacy and development.

Thirdly, Pakistan needs to focus on enhancing its diplomatic and strategic engagement with its neighbours and the broader international



community. Pakistan has an opportunity to leverage its strategic location to foster regional cooperation and integration. The country must work towards building stronger diplomatic ties with its neighbours, including Russia, China, India, Iran, and Afghanistan. This will not only help create a conducive environment for regional stability but also enhance Pakistan's credibility as a regional leader.

Fourthly, Pakistan needs to prioritize its security concerns, especially in the context of its ongoing conflict with India. The two countries have a history of tensions and conflict, and the situation has further deteriorated in recent years. Pakistan needs to adopt a balanced and pragmatic approach to its security concerns, including the use of diplomacy, dialogue, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Pakistan needs to invest in human development and social welfare to ensure that its population is equipped to play a meaningful role in regional affairs. Education, healthcare, and social welfare are critical components of a stable and prosperous society, and Pakistan needs to invest in these areas to build a sustainable and vibrant society that can contribute to regional development and stability.

Pakistan is undoubtedly a significant global player; despite the challenges, but its political stability and economic instability undermining its credibility. The country's strategic location, nuclear capability, and role in regional security and stability make it a vital player in the international community. Therefore, Pakistan's foreign and regional policy needs to reflect this position, and the country needs to play an active role in shaping global regional affairs.

One of Pakistan's most critical contributions to the International Community has been its role in the fight against terrorism. The country has been at the forefront of the war on terror, and its cooperation with the International Community in this regard has been significant. Pakistan has suffered greatly

from terrorist attacks and has lost thousands of its citizens in the fight against terrorism. The country's efforts in countering terrorism and extremism have been acknowledged and appreciated by the International Community. Our armed forces have eliminated terrorism in most professional way under command COAS and did splendid job, which NATO 51 Countries with latest weapons and equipment.

This unique location of Pakistan gives a critical role in regional diplomacy and conflict resolution. Pakistan has been a mediator in several regional conflicts, such as the US-Taliban peace talks, and has played a constructive role in resolving disputes between Afghanistan and other regional players apart bringing closer USA and China in early 1970s.

Pakistan's nuclear capability also gives it a strategic position in global affairs. The country is one of the nine nuclear-armed states and has a robust nuclear deterrence capability. Pakistan's nuclear capability has been a source of concern for some members of the International Community, but the country has taken fool proof measures to ensure the safety and security of its nuclear arsenal. Pakistan has also been an advocate of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and has played a constructive role in global efforts towards these goals. Our command and control system is most modern and duly acknowledged by IAEA and USA.

However, Pakistan's economic troubles and political instability have hindered its ability to play a more prominent role in global affairs. The country's economic challenges, such as high inflation, low Foreign Exchange Reserves, and a large trade deficit, have limited its ability to invest in development projects and contribute to global initiatives. The political instability in the country has also undermined Pakistan's credibility as a reliable partner in regional and global affairs.

Pakistan's foreign and regional policy needs to reflect its position as a global player. The country needs to focus on economic development and

stability, invest in human development and social welfare, address political instability, and enhance diplomatic engagement with its neighbours and the International Community. Pakistan needs to prioritize economic development, address political instability, enhance diplomatic engagement, prioritize security concerns, and invest in human development and social welfare. By doing so, Pakistan can play a meaningful role in regional stability and development.

### **Economic Growth Requires Political Stability**

Economic growth and political stability are closely intertwined. Political stability allows for long-term planning and fosters a conducive environment for investment. By isolating itself from regional politics, Pakistan could potentially focus on creating a stable political environment that would be attractive to foreign investors and promote economic growth.

In recent years, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has emerged as a crucial platform for economic cooperation between the two countries. It is a flagship project of the larger Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by China, aimed at enhancing regional connectivity and economic integration. If Pakistan were to isolate itself from regional politics, it could potentially harness the full potential of CPEC and other such economic collaborations to boost its economic growth and enhance visible job opportunities for skilled and unskilled Pakistanis.

### **Redirecting Resources for Economic Development**

Pakistan's involvement in regional politics has led to significant financial and human resource allocations to its defence sector. The country has one of the highest military expenditures as a percentage of GDP in the world. By distancing itself from regional politics, Pakistan could redirect these resources towards economic development projects, such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare, which are crucial for sustainable growth.

Investing in education and skill development can

help create a more skilled workforce, which is essential for attracting foreign investment and promoting entrepreneurship. Similarly, improved infrastructure can facilitate trade, improve connectivity, and create new job opportunities. By focusing on these areas, Pakistan can build a stronger foundation for economic growth.

### **Improved International Relations and Trade Opportunities**

Pakistan's regional political engagements have sometimes strained its relationships with other countries, particularly India and Afghanistan. By stepping back from these conflicts, Pakistan could improve its relationships with neighbouring countries and beyond, opening up new trade and economic cooperation avenues. We can take example of China, it has only focused on economical development and kept regional and international issues becoming economical viable on the side till economical joint to reclaim its regional disputes like Hong Kong falling peacefully in China's Lap

For instance, improved relations with India could pave the way for increased bilateral trade and cross-border investment. Moreover, as Pakistan improves its international standing, it may be able to negotiate better terms for trade agreements, access international financing, and join regional economic organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). These opportunities could significantly contribute to Pakistan's economic growth.

**Counter-Argument: Regional Politics and National Security** One of the primary reasons Pakistan has been deeply involved in regional politics is to safeguard its National Security Interests. Its ongoing rivalry with India and concerns over Afghanistan's stability necessitate a certain degree of involvement in regional politics. Thus, complete isolation from regional politics might not be feasible without compromising its National Security.

However, Pakistan could potentially adopt a more balanced approach, engaging in regional politics only when necessary to protect its interests, while also focusing on its internal development and fostering stronger relationships with other nations. This approach would allow Pakistan to maintain its sovereignty and security while avoiding unnecessary conflicts or dependencies. Here are a few steps that Pakistan can consider to adopt in more balanced approach:

a) **Strengthening Regional Diplomacy:** Pakistan should continue engaging with regional organizations such as SAARC, SCO, and ASEAN to promote dialogue and collaboration on various issues, including trade, connectivity, and security. This will enable Pakistan to foster a stable and cooperative regional environment while protecting its interests.

b) **Prioritizing Economic Development:** Economic growth is crucial for Pakistan's stability and development. By focusing on key sectors such as infrastructure, energy, agriculture, and Information technology, Pakistan can create employment opportunities, reduce poverty, and improve living standards. At the same time, it can enhance its capacity to engage in regional politics from a position of strength.

c) **Enhancing Bilateral Relationships:** Pakistan should look to strengthen ties with countries beyond its immediate neighbourhood, such as the European Union, the United States, China, and Russia. These relationships can help Pakistan diversify its economic and political partnerships, and benefit from technology transfers, investments, and market access. Our top most priority should be to have best of relationship with Russia, China and Iran and remain engaged with USA and European Union.

d) **Addressing Internal Challenges:** Pakistan needs to tackle issues like corruption, terrorism, and social inequality to create a more stable domestic environment. By addressing these challenges,

Pakistan can increase its credibility on the international stage and develop stronger ties with other nations.

e) **Promoting a Peaceful Resolution to Conflicts:** Pakistan should continue advocating for dialogue and negotiations to resolve disputes with its neighbours, such as the longstanding IJHK issue with India. A peaceful resolution to these conflicts can create a more stable regional environment and allow Pakistan to focus on its internal development.

f) **Strengthening its Defence Capabilities:** While prioritizing diplomacy and regional cooperation, Pakistan should also work on modernizing and enhancing its defence capabilities to ensure its security and protect its territorial integrity. Our minimum strategic and conventional deterrence is key to national and regional security.

g) By adopting a more balanced approach, Pakistan can better manage its regional and international engagements while simultaneously addressing its internal challenges. Despite its economic troubles and political instability, Pakistan remains a global player with a critical role in regional and global affairs. The country's contributions to counterterrorism, Regional Security and Stability, and Nuclear Deterrence are acknowledged and appreciated by the International Community. However, Pakistan's foreign and Regional Policy needs to reflect this position, and the country needs to take steps to address its economic and political challenges to play a more significant role in global/regional affairs. This would ultimately contribute to a more secure, stable, and prosperous future for the country and its people.

\*The writer is a Caretaker Home Minister, Sindh and renowned Defense and Security Analyst.

## IS CHINA HEADING TOWARDS WAR?

By Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib



The world is changing at a fast pace. The prevailing power structures are crumbling, and political leaders across the globe are frequently recalibrating their policies. A new force is emerging to pose a serious

threat to the lone superpower, which has academicians and researchers pondering; is China walking into a war?

Recently, the metaphor "the Thucydides trap" has been extensively used to explore the relationship between the rising power, China, and the lone superpower, the USA. Citing classical examples, the most likely scenario could be a war. This could likely happen intentionally (provocations), as in the Russian invasion of Afghanistan (1979), or through any accident, like the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at the start of World War 1. This is a dangerous assumption that relies too heavily on history. President Xi Jinping himself refuted the idea of the so-called "Thucydides Trap in the World."

### CURRENCY GAME

Attention has become focused on China's role in securing the deal between Saudi Arabia and Iran to re-establish diplomatic relations, which was truly a great success. Another recent deal, that was less in the spotlight, was between China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) and France's TotalEnergies for the first ever yuan-settled energy deal involving 65,000 metric

tons of Emirati liquefied natural gas. Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Russia, Brazil, and others are ready to deal in Chinese yuan (CNY). China is also involved in technology transfers that worry the US more than currency swaps.

With the emerging trading alignment among China, Russia, and Iran, all of which avoid US sanctions and the dollar, other nations from the Middle East, Africa, and Asia – India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, South Africa, etc.—are also receptive to deals in alternative currencies. That's a sizeable market for the US to defend. This is happening with the rise of independent leaders in the Third World. Currently, experts are divided on how increased CNY-denominated trade in the Middle East and elsewhere poses a serious threat to the US dollar's role as an international reserve currency. Due to state controls, the CNY does not match the global liquidity of the dollar. During 2022, on major financial transactions, the US dollar accounted for 96% of world trade, while the CNY was 2%.

The currency war on the digital front is more severe. While Bitcoin lost 60% of its value and the FTX collapsed, China is seizing the initiative in Web3 block chain technologies and token-based economics. The United States may not be keeping pace with Chinese moves in the digital economy.

The Middle East, remains a hub and even an incubator for FinTech. Although still in its infancy, growth in the Islamic FinTech market,

currently at \$79 billion, is expected to increase by 18% annually, with the top six countries in it being Saudi Arabia, Iran, Malaysia, the UAE, Turkey, and Indonesia. Together, they account for 81% of the total market size. The dollar's influence on the digital future is at stake. The CNY impact is gradual now, but with time, it could turn into a shock.

### THE GEOPOLITICS

The power centres are shifting towards the Pacific, with the US pursuing new allies and forming associations. Meanwhile, China is shifting its focus towards the Middle East, Africa, some European and South American countries. China is aware that it will have no future if it remains only a geo-economic power. It is rapidly increasing its military capability and trying to



reclaim some space.

China is resilient enough and will not tolerate any interference in its core areas, namely Tibet, Xinjiang, and the South China Sea. The Chinese leadership is fully aware of historic errors by other nations and will pursue a national policy whereby its resources and economic development are protected by a credible modern military force to avoid falling into the Polybius Trap. China is not looking for a patron.

The US policies reform or change after each election, but the Chinese direction is almost permanent. The stalked Russian invasion of

Ukraine has emboldened the US, which will apply the same tactics against China. The nature and engagement of both countries are entirely different.

Of all the disputes, such as those in Xinjiang, Tibet, and the South China Sea, the one in the South China Sea has the greatest potential to turn into a full scale war. All the regional players are militarily dependent on the US. This will ultimately be a direct confrontation between the US and China. China may be using both its ground based and naval assets, while the US will solely rely on its naval strength.

### THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

The SCS is a semi-enclosed area in Southeast Asia bordering eleven countries. The hydrocarbon resources in the region are extremely important to all the states bordering it. In addition to the proven 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion



cubic feet of natural gas, there are estimated to be many more undiscovered reserves in the SCS.

With the Strait of Malacca, the region is one of the most important trade routes. In addition to a large fishing area, more than 50% of annual global trade, one-third of crude oil, and more than half of liquefied natural gas (LNG) transport pass through the region. The SCS is contested by the littoral states with a set of overlapping sovereignty claims. Importantly, in the Paracel and Spratly Islands, international efforts to determine the status of the islands have not yielded positive results due to certain ambiguous criteria contained in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Since the 1990s, the conflict has become more complex due to the economic interests of the claimants and the Sino-American rivalry in the Asia-Pacific region.

### CHINA'S STRATEGY IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

China's strategic interests in the SCS arise from surging nationalism, greater economic independence, internal political stability, and the need for sustained development. China's appetite for energy has increased since the country became a net importer of oil in 1993. China claims nearly 80-90% of the total area through the maritime demarcation line, the Nine-Dash Line, which overlaps areas claimed by its neighbors. With its historically based claims, China seeks to preserve its "sovereign rights," such as fishing and shipping.

China's military spending has been steadily increasing over many years. While total military spending in Southeast Asia (2010-2019) increased from \$29.7 billion to \$40.5 billion, China's military spending increased from \$143.9 billion to \$266.4 billion.

Beijing, like other actors, has begun naval

modernization. To enforce its maritime claims, Beijing conducts military exercises and sends ships and aircraft to the disputed areas. It also imposes unilateral fishing bans, watch US vessels, monitor international navigation, and inters with oil exploration vessels. The construction of artificial islands on the reefs of the Spratly and Paracel Islands, the establishment of administrative control over areas like Sansha City on Woody Island, and military infrastructure on several reefs such as Fiery Cross Reef and Johnson South Reef draw strong criticism from the neighbors. The new military installations and radar enable China to effectively control the contested waters.

### DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS

China's diplomatic posture is fairly offensive. During the last decade, Beijing has extended diplomatic efforts in the form of cooperative and dispute settlement mechanisms and joint development to ease tensions with Southeast Asian countries, showing its intention to solve the problem peacefully. Beijing has participated in several bilateral and multilateral arrangements, such as the ASEAN-China Code of Conduct (COC), Sino-Malaysian and China-Vietnam Joint Development, and the China-Philippines MOU. Beijing assured its firm support for ASEAN's centrality in regional affairs. But some have doubts about whether China is acting in good faith, considering its rejection of the previous International Court Tribunal ruling and viewing the talks as a coercion attempt combined with inducements.

China's claims in the SCS dispute are nothing new; they have existed for centuries but have been strongly supported as the country's regional and global position has grown. China's military buildup has security-seeking

implications in the face of interference from the United States.

China has pursued an increasingly aggressive foreign-policy posture known as "wolf warrior" diplomacy, one that has forcefully staked China's positions across issues and regions. At heart, Xi's diplomacy calls for a more active role for China as a great power on the world stage aimed at reforming the Western-dominated international order.

The key characteristics of China's foreign policy are: reactions to inquiries into COVID-19's origin, strong posture in the SCS, firm stand on border disputes, and projecting military might in the Taiwan Strait.

At the 20th Party Congress, President Xi stated that "China's international influence, appeal, and shaping power have been significantly improved." Xi advocated for Taiwan's "peaceful reunification" but vowed not to renounce the use of force. Critics state that as China grows increasingly authoritarian under Xi, the sources of soft power—civil society, individuals, and the private sector—inevitably suffer.

### US ALLIANCES IN ASIA

The US perception of security leadership has taken a serious hit in the last four years. NATO is not geared towards China; only France and the UK are ready to show solidarity in the SCS. The QUAD consisting of the US, India, Japan, and Australia is still in nascent form.

In a renewed attempt, the US is expanding its military presence in Asia, aimed at countering Beijing and reassuring Indo-Pacific allies that it will stand with them against threats from China. The US actions stretch from Japan to the Solomon Islands. The US is more involved in

advanced military exercises and troop rotations in key areas of the Taiwan Strait and South China Sea. It is also ready to provide logistical support in a possible conflict with China, specifically with Taiwan.

The January 2023 saw new understanding with the Philippines, Japan and South Korea;

- In Philippines, the US secured access to four more military camps for some 500 troops military exercises, humanitarian aid, training, and other missions.

- In South Korea, the US would increase its deployment of advanced military assets, including fighter jets and aircraft carriers. The US already has some 28,000 troops and Terminally High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD), which draws criticism from China.

- Japan agreed to US troop presence on the island of Okinawa to enhance anti-ship capabilities and to construct runways on the small southern island of Mageshima to act as hubs for joint exercises, amphibious operations, and missile interception.

US allies are not on the same page in their relationships with China. They are not united with Washington on how to manage China. Beijing exploits these fissures. Apparently, China's increasing military assertiveness is reactionary against perceived threats as the littoral states are increasingly aligned with the US. The provocations in SCS are on a daily basis and chances or error are very high. The region has four declared nuclear states namely; China, Russia, North Korea and the US, plus two on the verge nuclear power South Korea and Japan. Very dangerous zone for error.

### **COST OF CHINA'S AGGRESSION**

The costs of a military confrontation would be extremely high for the claimants, which are among China's main foreign direct investment (FDI) targets and top trading partners, making it essential to avoid further escalation of the conflict and find a peaceful solution. Beijing often complains about increasing American involvement in its region, yet it will find it difficult to directly challenge the US, which is its largest creditor and trading partner. So it makes more sense for China to preserve regional balance and avoid hostilities that can harm decades of economic gains.

The Chinese strength also bears its own weakness. Export markets are crucial to its wealth in the face of ongoing recovery, a collapsed real estate market, and an ageing population. Beijing cannot afford to cross a threshold with the West that would jeopardize its own interests—whatever the military buildup in the Taiwan Straits.

### **CONCLUSION**

The territorial disputes are not only between China and its neighbors but also with America. At the moment, Beijing is pursuing a balanced strategy but seems unwilling to sacrifice its advantages. It is China's future moves that will determine whether there will be conflict or cooperation in the SCS. The dynamic nature of the conflict and regional power politics make it difficult to predict accurately. It can be said that China will pursue its interests through peaceful means, as the political and economic costs of a military conflict outweigh the benefits. Yet, if the level of provocation crosses the Chinese redline the chances of conflict are high.

\*Author is former ambassador of Pakistan and Chairman PCFR.



## UZBEKISTAN, THE EMERGING ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE OF CENTRAL ASIA

By Yonus Siddiqui



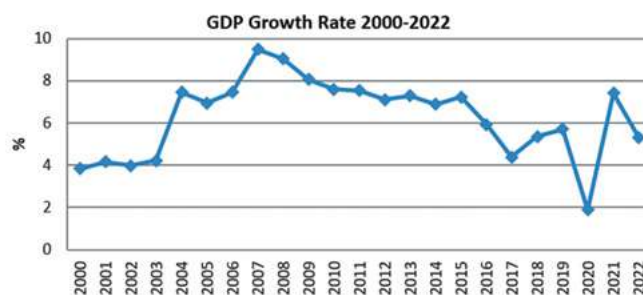
Uzbekistan is seen emerging as an economic powerhouse in Central Asia. After the breakup of Soviet Union in the early 1990s, the nation went through severe economic crisis just like all other CIS countries but has posted an impressive economic recovery and growth ever since. In recent years, it has become one of the fastest-growing economies in the region. The government of Uzbekistan has implemented several economic reforms which have enabled increased foreign investment and development of a diversified economy. The country's main economic activities include agriculture, manufacturing, and services. In addition, it has become a significant hub for energy and transportation.

Uzbekistan has a large and young population, with over 33 million people, providing a large and growing workforce. The nation also has a wealth of natural resources, such as gas, oil, minerals and agricultural produce. These resources have helped fuel the nation's economic growth. The government has encouraged foreign investment and has improved the business environment. This has allowed many international companies to establish operations in the country and has helped create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

### GDP Growth Rate

Uzbekistan has experienced significant economic growth over the last few years.

According to the World Bank, the country's GDP has grown by an average of 5.5% annually since 2015. This growth has been driven by increased foreign direct investment and a diversified economy. The GDP took a nosedive in 2019-2020 due to Covid-19, as in rest of the world, but bounced back in 2021.



### Factors Driving Uzbekistan's GDP Growth

Several factors have contributed to Uzbekistan's GDP growth in recent years:

#### Economic Reforms

Uzbekistan's government has implemented economic reforms to liberalize the economy and attract foreign investment. These reforms have included reducing red tape, streamlining regulations, and privatizing state-owned enterprises. As a result, Uzbekistan has climbed up the ranks of the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" index, from 166th place in 2018 to 69th place in 2020.

#### Strategic Location

Uzbekistan's strategic location at the crossroads of Asia has made it an attractive destination for foreign investors. The country shares borders with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,

Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan, providing a gateway to the broader Central Asian region. In addition, Uzbekistan is home to several major transport corridors, including the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route and the China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor. In 2022, China opened two new railway routes via Uzbekistan (a) China - Kyrgyzstan - Uzbekistan - Afghanistan route and (b) China - Kazakhstan - Uzbekistan - Turkmenistan - Caspian Sea - Azerbaijan - Georgia route.

### Diversification of the Economy

Uzbekistan has historically relied on its natural resources, such as cotton, gold, and natural gas, as the main drivers of its economy. However, in recent years, the government has tried to diversify the economy by promoting tourism, information technology, and agriculture sectors. This has helped to reduce the country's dependence on a single industry and increase its resilience to external shocks.

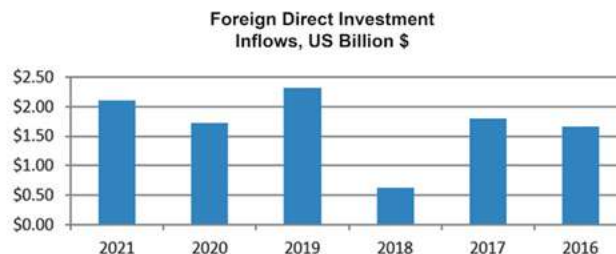
### Large Population

With a population of over 34 million people, Uzbekistan has a large domestic market that can provide significant business opportunities. In addition, the country's young and growing population provides a demographic dividend that can drive economic growth.

### Impact of Uzbekistan's GDP Growth on Central Asia

Uzbekistan's GDP growth has positively impacted the wider Central Asian region. The country's economic reforms and strategic location have made it an attractive destination for foreign investment, which has helped to create jobs and stimulate economic activity in neighbouring countries. In addition, Uzbekistan has been actively pursuing regional integration and cooperation, including through initiatives such as the Central Asia-South Asia Electricity

Transmission and Trade Project and establishing a regional transport and logistics centre in



Tashkent.

These figures show the fluctuating foreign direct investment (FDI) trend in Uzbekistan over the past five years. In 2018, FDI was at a relatively low level of \$0.62 billion, with a 65.26% decline from the previous year. However, in 2019, FDI saw a significant increase of 270.82%, reaching \$2.32 billion. This positive trend continued in 2020, with FDI reaching \$1.73 billion, although this was a decline of 25.39% from the previous year.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, FDI in Uzbekistan increased again in 2021, reaching \$2.10 billion, representing a 21.41% increase from 2020. This increase can be attributed to the continued efforts of the Uzbekistan government to improve the country's investment climate and attract foreign investors, as well as the implementation of various economic reforms to promote growth and development.

The government has implemented various measures to improve the investment climate, including liberalizing the foreign exchange market, simplifying the tax system, and reducing barriers to entry for foreign companies. Additionally, the government has actively sought out and courted foreign investors, mainly from Europe and Asia.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has become an attractive destination for foreign tourists. The country boasts a rich cultural heritage and stunning landscapes, making it a popular tourism destination. Uzbekistan is well-positioned to become a significant player in the global economy. Its growing economy, strategic location, and favourable business environment make it an attractive destination for foreign investors and tourists.

Since 2017, Uzbekistan has made consistent steps to restructure its market, making it far more robust to outside shocks. Uzbekistan, along with Armenia, Croatia, Georgia, and Montenegro, will be one of the 23 nations in the Europe and Central Asia area with the most robust GDP growth rates in 2022, at 5.3 percent. The region's most excellent anticipated growth rate is expected to occur in 2019 at 4.9 percent.

In summary, Uzbekistan's GDP growth is driving Central Asia forward, with the country's economic reforms, strategic location, diversification of the economy, and large population all contributing to its success. As Uzbekistan continues to pursue economic development and regional integration, it will likely become an increasingly important player in the wider Central Asian region.

\*Author is Director Regional Trade (Central Asia), TCS (Pvt) Ltd.



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# EVENTS



## Interactive Session on “RUSSIA AMIDST CHANGING GLOBAL DYNAMICS”

On October 9, 2022, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) organized an interactive session on “Russia Amidst Changing Global Dynamics” at Karachi. H.E. Andrey V Fedorov Consul General of the Russian Federation in Karachi address the session. The session was attended by former ambassadors of Pakistan, business elite of the city, academics, and members of the Council.



Group photo of H.E. Mr Andrey V Fedorov, Consul General of Russia with Chairman PCFR Amb Shahid M Amin, Secretary General Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Amb Alam Brohi, and Amb Hasan Habib.

Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General of PCFR presented the welcome address and acknowledged the worthy guest and participants. Mr Zubairi introduced the Council and briefed on the achievements of PCFR. Mr. Zubairi emphasized that global geo-politics and geo-economics had been undergoing a transition where news powers are emergence with new levels of engagements across the globe and Russia is no exception.

Ambassador Shahid M Amin, Chairman of PCFR and former Ambassador of Pakistan to former Soviet Union presented the introduction of the subject. Given the impact of Ukraine-Russia war on different regions around the globe, Ambassador Amin maintained that there was a need for a rule of law based international order and the nations around the globe should respect the sovereignty and international borders of other nations.



Chairman PCFR Amb Shahid M Amin presenting opening remarks.

Honorable Consul General Andrey V Fedorov began his talk by highlighting that today the world is facing extremely complicated geopolitical and economic landscape. We witness an inevitable and irreversible shift to the multipolar system of international relations Mr. Fedorov added.

While referring to Ukraine crisis Mr. Fedorov maintained that Russia started the special military operation in Ukraine in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and in execution of the treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic. He further said that Russia has consistently been trying to solve the crisis through dialogue and trying to convince the U.S. and European countries not to drag Ukraine into NATO, as it created direct security threats for us. However, all our proposals and solutions have been constantly rejected he added. Mr. Fedorov also criticize the role of western world in exploiting the situation in Ukraine through supporting Ukraine and manipulating the media narratives. The talk was followed by the lively question and answer session. Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib Senior Board member presented the vote of thanks and acknowledged the worthy guests.



*Honorable CG responding to questions during interactive session.*



*Chairman PCFR Amb Shahid M Amin presenting memento to H.E. Mr Andrey V Fedorov*

## Seminar on PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC CRISIS AND FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES

On October 22, 2022, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) organized a Seminar on “Pakistan’s Economic Crisis and Foreign Policy Challenges” in Marriott Hotel Karachi. Dr. Shamshad Akhtar former Governor State Bank and Ambassador Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry Director General of the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad & Former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan address the seminar. The seminar was attended by Karachi based Consular Corps, business elite of the city, former ambassadors of Pakistan, government officials, academics, and researchers.



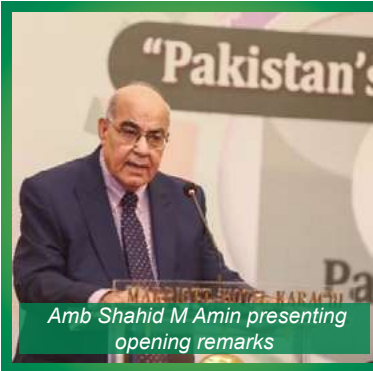
Group photo showing Chairman PCFR Amb Shahid M Amin, Secretary General Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Amb Hasan Habib, and Mr. Mohammed Tariq Yousuf President KCCI



Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting welcome address

Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General PCFR presented the welcome address and also highlighted the achievements of the Council. While highlighting the significance of the seminar, Mr Zubairi maintained that since independence Pakistan has been exposed to various economic challenges and due to which we have struggled in our relations with other countries particularly with the great powers. Mr. Zubairi further said that the situation today is not different from past where we lack indigenous growth, currency devaluation, energy crisis, current account deficit, higher imports, and catastrophic floods have impacted our economy. The vulnerable economic conditions along with changing global dynamics have unveiled a number of challenges on foreign policy fronts.





*Amb Shahid M Amin presenting opening remarks*

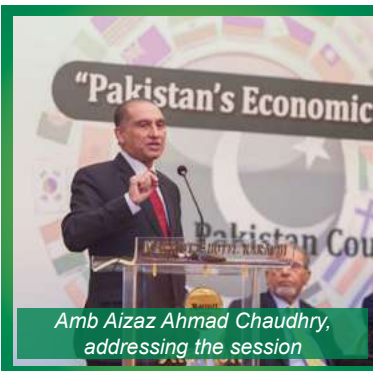
Ambassador Shahid M Amin Chairman PCFR, presented the opening remarks that set the stage for discussion on the subject of seminar. Ambassador Amin maintained that the economic health and foreign policy are intrinsically linked, and weak economy limits foreign policy options while strong economy presents more choices in dealing with other countries. Ambassador Amin further highlighted that is constantly changing we should not put all our eggs in one basket and be more prudent in maintaining our relations with other countries particularly with the U.S., Russia, China, Saudia, and Iran.



*Dr. Shamshad Akhtar sharing her thoughts on the subject*

Dr. Shamshad Akhtar addressed the seminar as the first speaker and presented her thoughts on "Pakistan's Economic Challenges: Present and Future". Dr. Akhtar highlighted the risks and vulnerabilities of Pakistan's economy and insisted that some of them surmounted because of our own faults and others because of global issues. She maintained that exposure to climate vulnerabilities, recurrent economic crisis, investment-saving gap, low productivity, and urban sprawl which encroaches agricultural and industrial land, are some of the critical problems of our economy. Dr. Akhtar presented the statistical figures to underscore the impact of a number of factors on our

economy that include recent floods, trade deficit, energy crisis, low import tariff regimes, non-competitive exports, regional political turbulence and uncertainties.



*Amb Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, addressing the session*

Dr. Akhtar proposed that in order to deal with these problems we have to tighten our fiscal belt and and few ways to achieve that include progressive tax reforms, revision of national finance commission award, withdrawal of a number of tax benefits, lowering the subsidies particularly of power sector, and consolidation of the development program where most of the investments are handled by the private sector. She concluded that this can only be done through sound economic management that include skillful and prudent macroeconomic management and preparation to manage uncertainties and risks associated with exogenous shocks.

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry shared his thoughts on "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Challenges amidst Economic Vulnerabilities" during the session. Ambassador Chaudhry started with highlighting the basic factors that determine the course of foreign policy. He emphasized that Pakistan's foreign policy has been driven national, regional, and global factors such as governments' priorities, economic wellbeing, geographic location, global and regional dynamics. Ambassador

Chaudhry further elaborated that the U.S.-China competition, Ukraine-Russia war, evolving situation in the middle east, climate change, and non-traditional security threats are critical global factors that impacted the foreign policy choices for Pakistan in the recent times.

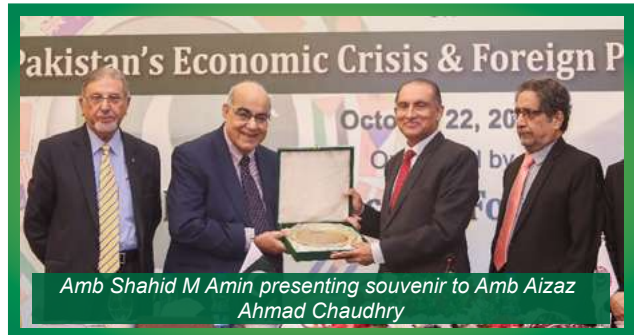
While highlighting regional scenarios that effect Pakistan's foreign policy choices, Ambassador Chaudhry maintained dealing with Modi's India has become a serious challenge which cherish the goal of RSS to establish a Hindu state and attain policing role across the region. Unstable Afghanistan is another regional factor that determine Pakistan's foreign policy, Ambassador Chaudhry said. He further said that absence of peace in Afghanistan will not only be challenge for Afghans and the region but also for the entire world.

Ambassador Chaudhry proposed in order to deal with the foreign challenges, we need to follow a path where we rely on our own strengths, consider development at the first, make foreign policy by setting aside egos and emotions, balancing then relations between the U.S. and China, look for other development partners in the nearby regions and beyond, and reorient relations regional countries based on narrative of development and peace.

The event was followed by lively question and answer session that generated a healthy debate. Ambassador Syed Hassan Habib senior board member presented the vote of thanks and acknowledged the worthy speakers and distinguished dignitaries for their presence.



*Dr. Shamshad Akhtar responding to questions during interactive session*



*Amb Shahid M Amin presenting souvenir to Amb Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry*



*Consul Generals of Russia, Turkey, Oman, and prominent members of business community attending the session.*

## Dinner in Honor of H.E. Dr. Brahim Romani Ambassador of Algeria to Pakistan

On December 14, 2022, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) hosted a dinner in honor of H.E. Mr. Brahim Romani, Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria to Pakistan, at Karachi. H.E. Romani visited PCFR on his first trip to Karachi after assuming the office of the ambassador of Algeria to Pakistan.



*Group photo showing H.E. Dr. Brahim Romani with Chairman Amb Shahid M Amin, Co-Chief Patron Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Mr Andrey V Fedorov Russian CG, and many former ambassadors of Pakistan*

Ambassador Shahid M Amin, (PCFR) greeted the visiting ambassador and worthy guests in his welcome address. Ambassador Amin highlighted the importance of relations between Algeria and Pakistan and maintained that both countries have been enjoying excellent relations for many decades as Pakistan played an important role in Algeria's independence. Ambassador Amin emphasized on the need of promoting trade activities between the two brotherly nations and making visa process more simplified for business community.



*Amb Shahid M Amin presenting welcome address*

While addressing the gathering, H.E. Mr. Brahim Romani appreciated the role of PCFR which serves as a bridge between the diplomatic corps and business community of Pakistan. Ambassador Romani



*Amb Dr. Brahim Romani addressing the meeting*

highlighted that Pakistan and Algeria have been engaged in mutually beneficial political and diplomatic ties but there is a lot of potential of economic relations which needs to be tapped.

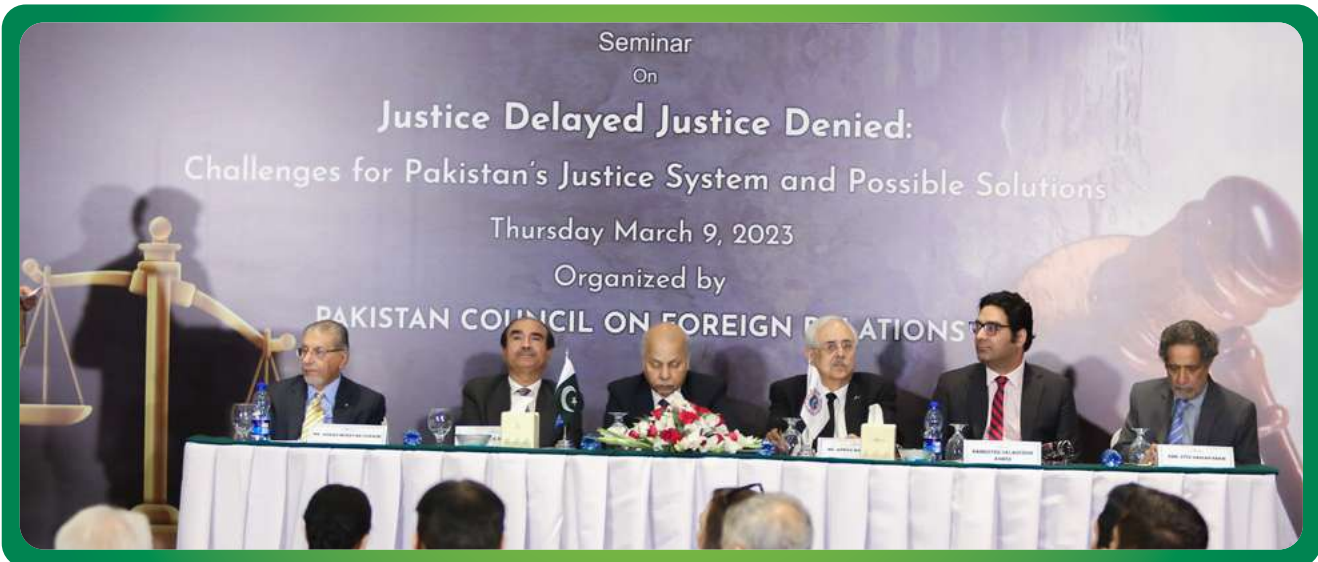
While commenting on the efforts to promoting commercial ties between the two brotherly countries, he said that Algerian mission appreciated the business related trips to Algeria and has quick visa process for members of commerce chambers of Pakistan. Ambassador Romani assured the audience that he will do everything possible to facilitate the trading relations between the two countries. The event was attended by members of diplomatic corps based in Karachi, government officials, serving and former judges, business community, academics, and the elite of the city. Ambassador Syed Hassan Habib presented vote of thanks while Ambassador Amin and Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, presented souvenirs to the ambassador.



*Amb Shahid M Amin and Mr Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting memento and gifts to honorable Amb Dr. Brahim Romani*

## Seminar on “Justice Delayed Justice Denied: Challenges for Pakistan’s Justice System and Possible Solutions”

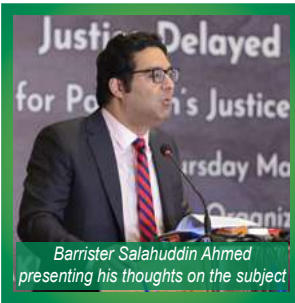
On March 9, 2023 Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR), hosted a Seminar on “Justice Delayed Justice Denied: Challenges for Pakistan’s Justice System and Possible Solutions” at Avari Towers Karachi. Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed former Chief Justice of Pakistan grace the event as the Chief Guest while Mr. Anwar Mansoor Khan former Attorney General of Pakistan and Barrister Salahuddin Ahmed former President Sindh High Courts Bar Association addressed the seminar.



Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General of PCFR presented the welcome address and briefed the audience on the journey of PCFR since its formation. Mr Zubairi said the justice system is crucial for upholding order in the society and judiciary plays vital role in addressing the disputes and ensuring fundamental rights of citizens. He further said that complexities of legal instruments and lack of resources have resulted in the delay in delivery of justice in Pakistan.

Ambassador G R Baluch presented the opening remarks on the subject of seminar and said that phrase of Justice Delayed is Justice Denied is as relevant as it was more than two centuries back when it was first coined in nineteenth century. Ambassador Baluch further said that access to justice is a fundamental human right and a critical component of good governance as it ensures that every individual has the ability to seek legal record and grievances addressed in impartial way. He raised question that if we can use technology including artificial intelligence for case management, scrutiny of evidence, and application of basic laws for enhancing the efficiency and accuracy in our judicial system.

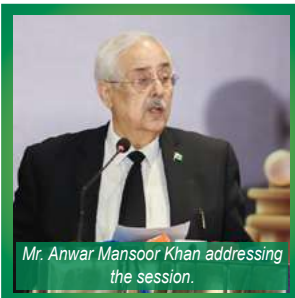




Barrister Salahuddin Ahmed presenting his thoughts on the subject

Barrister Salahuddin Ahmed addressed the seminar as the first speaker. He highlighted that the problem with justice is link with only complains from all the stakeholders of the system rather than rectifying the issues with concrete steps. Barrister Ahmed maintained that there is systematic problem in our justice system which needs to be tackled systemically if we want to improve the system. He further said that systemic solution demands empirical research, collection of quantitative data, and data analysis which can lead to the hypothetical solutions that can be tested into different court systems and monitor results accordingly.

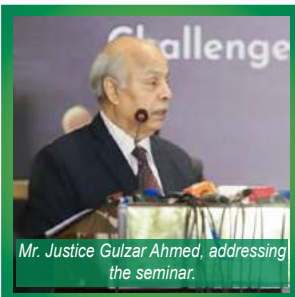
Barrister Ahmed proposed that there is need of a dedicated task force with authority of collecting data on filing of cases, how it is processed through the court system, and then how it is disposed of. He further said that the task force needs to suggest new solutions of case management and get them implemented through all the stakeholders (i.e. judges, lawyers, government, and other stakeholders) and then monitor for a qualitative improvement. Barrister Ahmed also emphasized upon the inclusion of modern technology for filing and management of cases to avoid the delays on process. He further said that all the reforms need to be undertaken with institutional investment to have concerted effort to affecting the change.



Mr. Anwar Mansoor Khan addressing the session.

Mr Anwar Mansoor Khan while addressing the session highlighted that delay in deciding the cases has become a serious issue of our justice system. He further highlighted that we lacked behind in laws such as the issue of with laws such as civil procedure code, the criminal procedure code, the Pakistan penal code, and similar codes which are crucial in conducting and deciding the cases. Talking about the capacity of courts he specifically mentioned that high courts are overloaded with number cases which are files genuinely or otherwise. Mr Khan said that the case management is very crucial aspect of our justice system but in our courts working it lacked effective case management system.

Mr Anwar Mansoor recommended that legislature has to modify the chief court rules, civil court rules, and civil procedure codes substantially as these laws are outdated which are causing complexities in deciding the cases. He further stressed upon the change in methodologies being used in proceeding with cases in our courts such as digitization of process of filing cases so that it is properly archived and is accessible to concerned authorities. He further said that there has to be amendment in the civil procedure code in relation to the alternate dispute resolution specially through mediation that would reduce the number of cases filed in courts. He also pointed out we may be much bothered about the delays but it has direct impact on decreasing or boosting the confidence of foreign investors therefore we need to make necessary amendments to relevant laws to cater for those investors.



Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, addressing the seminar.

Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, former Chief Justice of Pakistan began with contrasting the relevance of two famous phrases "Justice Delayed Justice Denied" and "Justice Hurried is Justice Buried" which are equally famous in the judicial sphere. Justice Ahmed maintained that the literal meaning of both phrases would be simple that Justice has to be done and seen to be done

without inexplicable delay. He highlighted the importance of Justice delivery which plays a vital role in the socio- economic development of the country and bring harmony in the society by eliminating uncertainties.



Justice Ahmed highlighted that the Judiciary in Pakistan is under severe stress owing to ever mounting pendency of cases which causes delay in decision of cases and this phenomenon is as old as the country itself. He further said that the courts on the basis of available resources are constantly addressing this chronic issue but the backlog is still there which causes stagnation of the society.

While referring to the constitutional trichotomy of power, Justice Ahmed said that there is no other power center except Parliament, Executive and Judiciary. Justice Ahmed mentioned that parliament and the executive were facing a tough time and there were challenges for their 'survival', but they must spend more time to amend outdated laws for quick dispensation of justice. Although, it is a tall task, but a real government with popular vote to deliver to the people, should take up all these issues," Justice Gulzar added.

Justice Gulzar Ahmed concluding his talk with several suggestions, including increasing the strength of judges, filling vacant posts of judges, penalizing frivolous litigants, discouraging unjustified adjournments and time frame for hearing of a case in order to improve judicial system and timely disposal of cases. Justice Gulzar further said that the government should constitute commissions and committees and involve lawyers and civil society to come up with suggestions for disposal of cases as early as possible. Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib presented the vote of thanks and acknowledged the presence of worth speakers and guests from the diplomatic corps, legal fraternity, business community, and academia.



Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Secretary General PCFR presenting souvenirs to worthy speakers

## Breakfast Meeting with H.E. Mr. Charles Delogne, Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan



Group photo of H.E. Charles Delogne, Ambassador of Belgium with Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Co-Chief Patron PCFR, Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Secretary General, and Prof. Dr. Khalida Ghaus senior member of PCFR

On April 26, 2023, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR), hosted a breakfast meeting with H.E. Mr. Charles Delogne Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan at a Marriott Hotel, Karachi. The meeting was attended by Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, former Chief Justice of Pakistan and Co-Chief Patron of the Council, Mr. Abid M Husain Trade Commissioner Embassy of Belgium, Ambassador Alam Brohi, Ambassador G R Baluch, Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib, Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, members of business community, patrons, and senior members of the council.





H.E. Mr. Charles Delogne highlighted the importance and scope of relations between Belgium and Pakistan. Excellency maintained that both countries enjoy strong trade and economic relations. He further highlighted that Belgium offers scholarships for Pakistani students and nearly 50 Pakistani students are pursuing PhDs from there. Dr. Khalida Ghaus senior member of the Council highlighted the need of cooperation between the PCFR and Belgium based think tanks for undertaking collaborative research projects. H.E. Delogne appreciated the idea and agreed to support such undertakings during his tenure of the office. The meeting was followed by interactive discussion on various other issues of mutual interest. At the Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General presented souvenir to H.E. Mr. Charles Delogne.



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Secretary General PCFR along with senior members of PCFR presenting souvenir to Ambassador Charles Delogne*

## Breakfast Meeting with H.E. Mr. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of South Africa to Pakistan



Group photo showing H.E. Mr. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of South Africa to Pakistan with Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Co-Chief Patron PCFR, Amb Syed Hasan Habib, Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, and senior members of the Council.

On May 4, 2023 Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR), hosted a breakfast meeting with H.E. Mr. Mthuthuzeli Madikiza, High Commissioner of South Africa to Pakistan at Avari Towers, Karachi. The meeting was attended by Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, former Chief Justice of Pakistan and Co-Chief Patron of the Council, Ambassador Alam Brohi, Ambassador Syed Hasan Javed, Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib, Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, prominent businessmen of the city, patrons, and senior members of the Council.



H.E. Mr. Madikiza highlighted the importance and scope of relations between South Africa and Pakistan. Excellency maintained that there is a great potential of trading cooperation between the two countries and which can be tapped through enhancing cooperation between people of both countries. Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib highlighted that Pakistan's geography offers vital linkages for regional

connectivity which beneficial for African nations as well.

Ambassador Habib emphasized on the need of developing cooperation between the PCFR and similar organizations in South African. H.E. Mr. Madikiza welcomed the idea and consented to support such undertakings during his tenure of the office. The meeting was followed by interactive discussion on various other issues of mutual interest. At the end of the meeting Justice Gulzar Ahmed presented souvenir to H.E. Mr. Madikiza.



## Interactive Session on “Pakistan-Iran Relations: Prospects & Challenges”



Photo showing H.E. Dr. Vahid Jalalzadeh with Co-Chief Patron Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Consul General Mr. Hasan Nourian, Amb Hasan Habib, and Mr Ahsan Zubairi.

On May 13, 2023 Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) hosted an interactive session on “Pakistan-Iran Relations: Prospects and Challenges” at Karachi. Dr. Vahid Jalalzadeh Chairman National Security and Foreign Policy Commission (NSFPC) of Iranian Parliament along with Dr. Abolfazl Amouei, Spokesperson of NSFPC, Engineer Ramazan Ali Sangdovini member Iran-Pakistan Friendship Group, and Mr. Hossein Asadi attended the seminar and shared thoughts on the subject. The session was attended by Karachi based Consul Generals, former ambassadors of Pakistan, Pakistani parliamentarians, business community, members of PCFR, and academicians.



Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed former Chief Justice of Pakistan and Co-Chief Patron of PCFR presented the welcome address while Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General PCFR highlighted the role and contributions of PCFR in promoting Pakistan’s interests at national and international level. Ambassador Syed Hassan Habib, Senior Board member of PCFR



*Dr. Vahid Jalalzadeh addressing the session.*

while presenting the opening remarks highlighted that the relationship between Pakistan and Iran have witnessed different phases of highs and lows. Ambassador Habib maintained that the border with Iran despite having some problems always remained manageable and both countries cooperated with each other to counter the common challenges.

Dr. Vahid Jalalzadeh said that Iran always looks forward to establishing good relations with all of its neighbors and we enjoy mutually beneficial relations with Pakistan as well. He shared that in the capacity of serving as governor of one of Iran's provinces he has observed that both countries are very important for each other. Dr. Jalalzadeh appreciated the efforts of hosting this interactive session which offered an opportunity to share experiences. He further said that on returning back to Iran they would put forward the takeaways of this meeting in Iran's parliament and further discuss ways to enhance cooperation between the two countries, and also proposed to invite PCFR's delegation to discuss the prospects of mutually beneficial relations.



*Consul General of Iran Mr Hasan Nourian presenting his thoughts on the subject.*

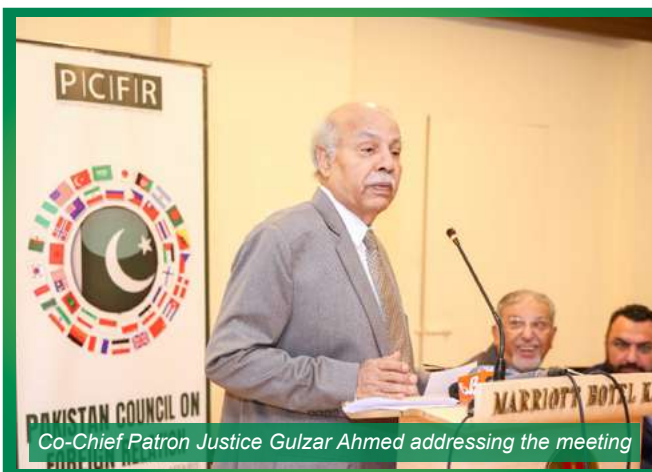
H.E. Mr Hassan Nourian Consul General of Iran in Karachi also addressed the session and highlighted that both countries enjoy mutually beneficial relations as Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan in 1947 while Pakistan was the first to recognize Iran after the 1979 Revolution. While commenting on economic relations, H.E. Nourian maintained that we are working on enhancing the volume of trade between the two brotherly countries and aim to reach \$5 billion in a year's time. The session was followed by a lively question and answer session.

## Interactive Session with H.E. Sheikh Yousef Hasan Khalawi, Secretary General The Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting the welcome address.*

On June 01, 2023, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) – Karachi-based think tank - hosted an interactive session with H.E. Sheikh Yousef Hasan Khalawi, Secretary General, Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (ICCIA), at Marriott Hotel Karachi. The session was attended by Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed, former Chief Justice of Pakistan and Co-Chief Patron of the Council, Dr. Abdul Badih El Dada, Director of Events Management, Karachi-based Consul Generals of Muslim countries, former ambassadors of Pakistan, prominent business elites of the city, patrons, and senior members of the Council.



*Co-Chief Patron Justice Gulzar Ahmed addressing the meeting*

appreciated the role of ICCIA in the Muslim world.

Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Secretary General presented the welcome address and briefed participants on the achievements of the PCFR since its formation. Mr. Zubairi highlighted that PCFR has been playing an important role in promoting Pakistan's soft and positive image and also serving as a bridge between foreign missions and the Pakistani community. Mr. Zubairi maintained that there is a need for joint ventures between the business community of Pakistan and brother Muslim countries, and ICCIA can play a vital role in this regard. Mr. Justice Gulzar Ahmed also addressed the session and

While addressing the meeting H.E. Sheikh Yousef Hasan Khalawi highlighted the role ICCIA has been playing in promoting vital economic linkages among the Muslim countries and Muslim community living in other countries. He maintained that ICCIA's endeavors are aimed to facilitate economic ties through promoting private investments by the members of ICCIA. Mr. Khalawi highlighted the role of trading relations in the spread of Islam across the globe. He further said through business diplomacy we can establish relations that will equally benefit the entire Muslim Ummah. H.E. Khalawi also appreciated the role of organizations like PCFR in developing mutually beneficial bonds between trading communities of the Islamic world.



*H.E. Sheikh Yousef Hasan Khalawi, addressing the meeting participants*

While presenting conclusive remarks Ambassador G R Baluch highlighted that there is a great potential for economic cooperation among Muslim countries. Ambassador Baluch emphasized that there is a need of collaboration, cooperation, and collective wisdom at the political, economic, and social levels to maximize the benefits for the Muslim Ummah. Ambassador Syed Hassan Habib presented the vote of thanks and acknowledged the worthy guest and participants.



## Interactive Session on “U.S.-Pakistan Relations: Present and Future”



Head table photo showing the U.S. Ambassador H.E. Donald Blome, Consul General Ms. Nicole Theriot, with PCFR senior member including Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Mr. Zubair Tufail, Amb Hasan Habib, and Mr. Ahsan Zubairi

On June 23, 2023, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) hosted an interactive session on “U.S.-Pakistan Relations: Present & Future” in Karachi. H.E. Mr. Donald Blome Ambassador of the U.S. to Pakistan addressed the session while H.E. Ms. Nicole D Theriot Consul General of the U.S. to Karachi was also present on the occasion. The session was attended by the members of consular corps, former ambassadors, business community, and PCFR members.



Justice Gulzar Ahmed presenting opening remarks on the occasion

Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General of PCFR presented the welcome address and highlighted the activities of the council that contributed in bridging the gap between the diplomatic corps and the Pakistani community. Mr. Zubairi said that since 1947, the relations between Pakistan and U.S. has seen various phases of cordiality and differences defined by the logic of transactional necessity. Mr. Zubairi further said that owing to recent alliance and counter-alliances across the globe, the relations between Pakistan and the U.S. has been a widely

debated topic in our country. Justice Gulzar Ahmed Co-Chief Patron of PCFR also spoke on the



occasion and highlighted the historical significance of relations between the U.S. and Pakistan.



*Ambassador Donald Blome addressing the session*

H.E. Ambassador Blome highlighted the economic and political significance of relations between Pakistan and the U.S. Ambassador Blome emphasized that the U.S. wants to see Pakistan as a stable, prosperous, and active partner of the global community. Ambassador highlighted that in recent times many commentators try to frame the U.S. relationship with Pakistan through the prism of China or India or Russia but he viewed that the U.S. relationship with Pakistan can and should stand on its own.

Ambassador Blome further said that economic issue is the major problem for Pakistan and the U.S. was keen to see the resolution of this problem. While commenting on the impact of climate change on Pakistan, Ambassador maintained that the U.S. has extended the best possible assistance to Pakistan to tackle in tackling the devastation caused by the floods of last year. He said it is their desire to see a Pakistan that is resilient to the effects of climate change. In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib thanked the guests and expressed hope that U.S-Pakistan relations will be mutually beneficial in the future.



*Ambassador Donald Blome responding to questions during Q/A session.*



Justice Gulzar Ahmed and Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting memento to Ambassador Donald Blome



Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting memento to Consul General Ms. Nicole Theriot

## Interactive Session on “Pakistan-ASEAN Relations: Road to Growth & Prosperity”



Group photo showing Mr. Zubair Tufail, Co-Chief Patron PCFR and Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi with Karachi based Consul Generals of ASEAN nations including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Philippines

On September 9, 2023 Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) hosted an interactive session on “Pakistan-ASEAN Relations: Road to Growth & Prosperity” in a local hotel in Karachi. Karachi based consul generals of ASEAN nations including Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat, Consul General of Indonesia, Mr. Herman Hardynata Bin Ahmad, Consul General of Malaysia, Mr. Narut Soontarodom, Consul General of Thailand, Ms. Nguyen Thi Diep Ha, Head of Vietnam Trade Mission, and Dr. Imran Yousuf, Honorary Consul General of Philippines addressed the session.



Mr. Zubair Tufail presenting welcome address

Mr Zubair Tufail Co-Chief Patron of PCFR welcomed the honorable Consul Generals and all the participants. Mr. Tufail said that nowadays ASEAN is one of the fast-growing platforms founded on the principles of cooperation, amity, and non-interference. He further said that Pakistan has longstanding cooperation with this bloc driven by a number of agreements but the mutually beneficial economic cooperation is yet to achieve the

desired results. He recommended that there is a need for an immediate and focused approach to further strengthen the relations between Pakistan and ASEAN.

Dr. June Consul General of Indonesia highlighted the role of ASEAN as a bloc of rapidly and consistently growing economies. He highlighted that ASEAN's current growth rate which is exceeding the global average offers opportunities for growth and prosperity for all the countries specially for Pakistan in the fields of IT, agriculture, transport, and communication.



*Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat, Consul General of Indonesia and Mr. Herman Hardynata Bin Ahmad, Consul General of Malaysia addressing the session*

Mr. Herman Consul General of Malaysia expressed his value for Pakistan-ASEAN cooperation on multilateral grounds and the bilateral ties between Malaysia and Pakistan. He particularly appreciated Pakistan's efforts in creating short diplomatic courses for ASEAN diplomats, a scholarship-based technical assistance program, and the digital payments and financial inclusion program.



*Mr. Narut Soontarodom, Consul General of Thailand presenting his thoughts on the subject*

In his address, the Consul General of Thailand presented a roadmap highlighting the four key areas to achieve active engagement and meaningful cooperation between ASEAN and Pakistan. The blueprint emphasized on political and security cooperation, economic cooperation- especially on the grounds of promoting food security, the people-to-people exchanges and human resource development by via tourism and business interactions, and particularly

highlighted the imperative of clean and sustainable future.

Honorary Consul General of Philippines deliberated on the successful growth model of Philippines and welcomed Pakistan to take lessons from its investment-favoring and tourism-friendly growth policies and take initiative to join its \$180 billion public-private partnership project, Build, Better and More. In addition to presenting solutions for Pakistan's financial crisis, he acknowledged Pakistan's role in helping Philippine's economy with its trade in textile, pharmaceuticals, and cements that actually has more edge and more benefit for Pakistan.



*Dr. Imran Yousuf, Honorary Consul General of Philippines and Ms. Nguyen Thi Diep Ha, Head of Vietnam Trade Mission addressing the session*

The head of Vietnam trade mission Karachi, specifically shared her thoughts on Pakistan-ASEAN and Pakistan-Vietnam relations. By deliberating on member countries' lack of competition in Pakistan's markets, she drew comparison between the trading figures of Pakistan and Vietnam. After mentioning the key Vietnamese exports of Cashew nuts, cinnamon, fish products, synthetic fiber, tea, chemicals, and natural rubber, and the key Pakistani exports of sea food and particularly sport goods, she highlighted the alarmingly low figures in Pakistan's trade sectors and identified potentials of bilateral trade.



*Amb Hasan Habib presenting concluding remarks and vote of thanks*

Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib senior member of PCFR presented the concluding remarks and stressed upon the need to active cooperation between ASEAN and Pakistan. Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presented mementos to worthy guests.



*Consul Generals of Iran, Turkey, Oman, Russia, and prominent dignitaries attending the session*

## Interactive Session on “Pakistan-Russian Relations and Russia’s Role in the Evolving Global Dynamics”



Group photo showing H.E. Mr. Danila V Ganich with Amb. Qazi M Khalilullah, Mr. Zubair Tufail, Amb. Hasan Habib, and Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubair

On October 21, 2022, Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) hosted an interactive session on “Pakistan-Russian Relations and Russia’s Role in the Evolving Global Dynamics” in Karachi. H.E. Mr Danila V Ganich Ambassador of the Russian Federation and Ambassador Qazi M. Khalilullah former Ambassador of Pakistan to Russia addressed the session.

Mr. Zubair Tufail CO-Chief Patron PCFR presented the welcome address and introduced the participants on the activities of the Council. Mr. Tufail said Russia has always been regarded a great power due to its large geographical size, rich energy resources, advanced nuclear capabilities, and permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. Given these specialties, Russia has crucial role to play in the evolving global dynamics of the contemporary era as well.



Amb. Qazi Khalilullah presenting open remarks on the subject

While presenting the opening remarks Ambassador Khalilullah said that the relationships between Pakistan and Russia are marked by mutual respect and trust. Ambassador Khalilullah further said that the enabling environment created by Russia has sustained bilateral relations of mutual interest between the two states which is translated into high-level military-to-military exchanges, trade contracts in energy sector and food security.

Ambassador Khalilullah, referring to the crisis and instability in Afghanistan, called for Russia’s role in brokering peace and mainstreaming the avenues of economic cooperation in the field of LNG, LPG, and electricity.



*Amb. Danila Ganich addressing the session*

In his address Ambassador Danila Ganich recognized that the good relations between Russia and Pakistan were evolving at a natural pace. While responding to a question Ambassador Ganich was straightforward in his claim that Russia is ready for collaboration and equal partnership for mutual benefit. Ambassador Ganich further called for an improved role of the Pakistani government in economic cooperation initiatives and independent payment structures.

Ambassador Ganich condemned the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli government in its act of revenge against Palestinian civilians, and reiterated Russia's call for ceasefire and humanitarian assistance. In his concluding remarks Ambassador Hasan Habib Chairman PCFIR applauded Russian Ambassador's remarks and hoped that Pakistan and Russian will attain full potential of their relations for the mutual benefit. Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General presented souvenirs to worthy guests.



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting memento to Amb. Danila V Ganich*



*Mr. Zubair Tufail presenting memento to Amb. Qazi Khalilullah*

## Interactive Session on “Pakistan-Iran Relations: Present & Future”



Group photo showing Amb. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam with Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Mr. Zubair Tufail, Iran's CG Mr. Hasan Nourian, Amb. Hasan Habib, and Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi

On November 20, 2023 Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) hosted an interactive session on “Pakistan-Iran Relations: Present and Future” in Karachi. H.E. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan addressed the session. The session was attended by Consul Generals of Iran, Turkey, Russia, and Oman, business community of the city, and members of PCFR.

Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib, Chairman of PCFR presented the welcome address and thanked honorable Ambassador and worthy guests for attending the session. Ambassador Habib highlighted that Pakistan and Iran maintain warm cordial relations characterized by historic contacts and a common future. Amb Habib further stressed that both share a common destiny and strive to improve the condition of their people.



Amb. Hasan Habib presenting opening remarks on the subject

Ambassador Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam began his talk by offering condolences on the killing of innocent Palestinians. Ambassador Moghaddam stated that the war in Gaza is not for a piece of land but for the entire Islamic civilization is threatened by the Zionist plan of further occupation and expansion. He further highlighted despite the high cost of supporting the Palestinian cause, Iran remains loud in its condemnation of Israel's apartheid.



Amb. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam addressing the session

While talking about the relations between Pakistan and Iran, Ambassador Moghaddam maintained that in addition to the geographical connections, both countries are connected by shared history, cultural values, and civilizational ties. The ambassador emphasized on advancing further trade and investments specially in the fields of medicine and technology. He



further said that the potential of open border markets and the east-west transportation links that can enhance the connectivity between the two states. The ambassador stressed the role of Iranian and Pakistani think tanks and researchers in developing mutually beneficial relations between the two countries.



*Mr. Zubair Tufail sharing his thoughts during the meeting*

Mr. Zubair Tufail, Co-Chief Patron of PCFR while addressing the session emphasized the importance of trading relations between the countries. He maintained that despite sanctions Iran has shown resilience and determination for progress but the level of progress could have been higher if freed of sanctions. Mr. Zubair further emphasized the further consolidation of trading relations between the two nations. In the end Amb G R Baluch, Advisor PCFR presented the vote of thanks, and Justice Gulzar Ahmed along with Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presented the memento to the worthy guest.



*Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi presenting memento to Amb. Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam while Justice Gulzar Ahmed, Mr. Zubair Tufail, Amb. Hasan Habib, Mr. Faisal Zahid Malik, and Consul Generals of Iran, Russia, Turkey, and Oman are also present in the picture*

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## PCFR Delegation's Visit to Iran

A delegation from Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) visited the Islamic Republic of Iran from October 22-28, 2023 at the invitation of the Center of Research Islamic Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The delegation was led by Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib, Chairman along with Advisors of PCFR, Ambassador Muhammad Saleem Bhounr and Ambassador Rafiuzzaman Siddiqui, and Executive Director, Mr. Syed Ghulam Raza.

During this visit, the delegation had several meetings with important dignitaries of Iran and discussed matters of mutual interests and ways to promote relations between the brotherly countries.



*Group Photo of PCFR's delegation with  
H.E. Dr. Vahid Jalalzadeh, Chairman of National Security and Foreign Policy Committee,  
the Iranian Parliament (Majlis)*



*Group Photo of PCFR's delegation with  
H.E. Dr. Babak Negahdari, Head of Center of Research Islamic Parliament of Iran, Tehran  
and other members of research staff.*



Group Photo of PCFR's delegation with H.E. Dr. Muhammad Hassan Shaykh al-Islami, President, Institute of Political and International Studies (IPIS) while Dr. Khalil Shirgholami, Vice President for Research and other senior members are also present.



Ambassador Syed Hasan Habib Chairman PCFR with H.E. Dr. Ahmad Amirabadi, Head of Iran-Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group, Tehran.



*Group photo of PCFR delegation with Head of Pilgrims Affairs, Astan Quds Razavi, at Holy Shrine of Imam Ali Reza a.s. Mashhad*



*PCFR delegation with the Head and Research Staff of Institute for East Strategic Studies, Mashhad, Iran.*

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# GLIMPSES OF THE PAST



## PCFR Delegation's visit to Chinese Consulate

PCFR delegation including Amb Syed Hasan Habib Acting Chairman, Mr. Zubair Tufail Co-Chief Patron, Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General, Mr. Anwar Mansoor Khan, Mr. Abdul Basit Essani, and Mr. Syed Ghulam Raza attended a Dinner hosted by H.E. Mr. Yang Yundong Consul General of China in Karachi, Pakistan. The dinner was followed by a cake cutting ceremony to celebrate 10 years of CPEC and presentation of memento to honorable Consul General by Mr. Zubairi.



*Group Photo of PCFR delegation with  
H.E. Mr. Yang Yundong Consul General of China,  
Mr. Zhang Hao Vice Consul General is also present in the picture*





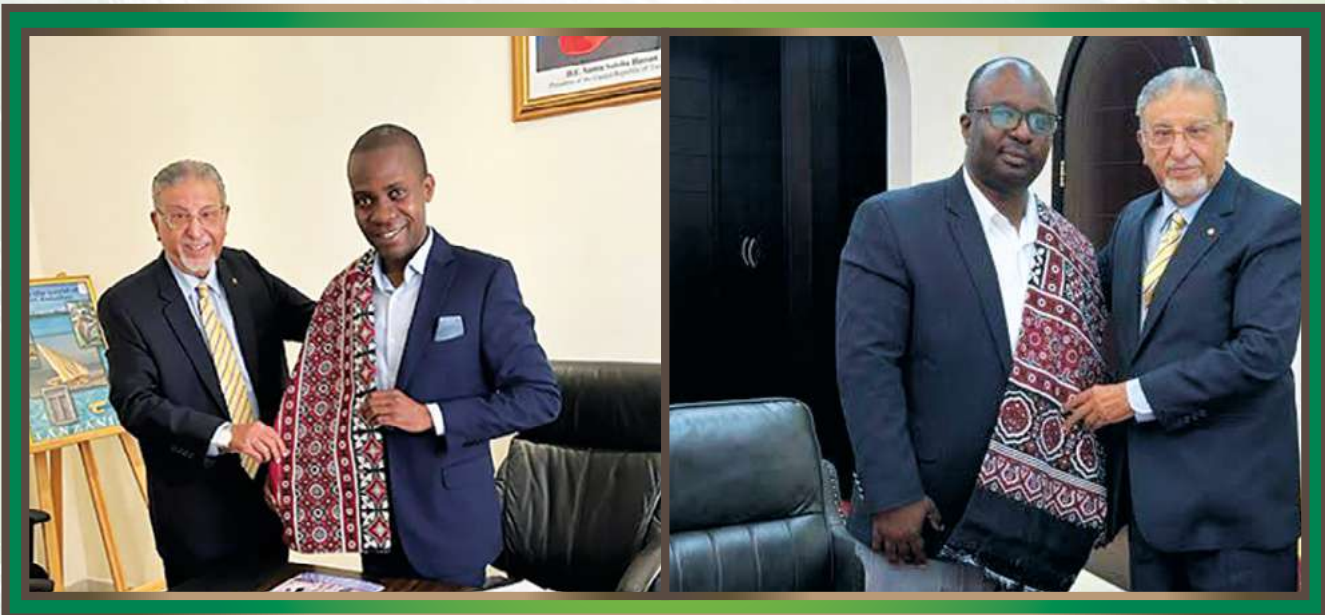
*Amb Syed Hasan Habib Chairman and Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi called on H.E. Mr. Yang Yundong and extended best wishes on assuming the office of the Consul General of China in Karachi*



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General PCFR paid a courtesy call on Mr. Yi Sung Ho, Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Karachi.*



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi along with H.E. Mr Andrey V Fedorov Russian Consul General called on H.E. Mr. Kamran Khan Tessori, Governors Sindh and discussed matters of mutual interest.*



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General PCFR paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. MR. Hangi Laban Mgaka Chancellor (Head of Chancery) Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania UAE accredited to Pakistan and Mr. Iddi Seif Bakari Consul General of Tanzania to Dubai.*



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi Secretary General PCFR paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Patricio Diaz Broughton Ambassador of Chile to UAE Accredited to Pakistan and presented traditional Sindhi Ajrak.*



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi and Ambassador Syed Hassan Habib along with Ahmed Zafar Chief Growth Officer TCS Logistics paid a courtesy call on H.E. Mr. Sardar Ahmed Shakeeb Ambassador Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan. Mr. Ahsan Zubairi presenting memento to honorable ambassador while Consul General of Afghanistan Mr. S M Abdul Jabbar is also present on the occasion.*



*H.E. Mr. Su Sangpyo Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Pakistan with Late Ambassador Shahid M Amin, Prof. Dr. Moonis Ahmar, Ambassador Alam Brohi, and Ambassador Hasan Habib during a seminar on "Emergence of New Terror Threats and Regional Plans for Peace building" hosted by PCFR.*



*Mr. Hunaid Hussain Lakhani (Late) Chancellor Iqra University and Co-Chief Patron PCFR while presenting souvenir to H.E. Mr. Markian Chuchuk, Ambassador of Ukraine to Pakistan. Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi is also present.*



*PCFR delegation led by the Chairman Ambassador Shahid M Amin (Late), called on H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and briefed him on the activities of the Council*



*Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, presenting memento to H.E. Ms. Androulla Kaminara, former Head of European Delegation to Pakistan.*

## PCFR's YOUTH ACCESS PROGRAM

In a constantly evolving world, the Pakistan Council on Foreign Relations (PCFR) considers the importance of the development of high-quality future leaders resourced with boundless energy, enthusiasm and promise. PCFR, through its Youth Access Program, engages young minds to gain valuable training in research and analysis that will be instrumental for the development of their professional skills. We encourage interns to exchange their vibrant ideas and offer practical experience gained rather than mere theoretical knowledge.

As part of this program PCFR engaged 13 students of International Relations, Economics, and Media from the Institute of Business Management (IoBM), Karachi. The participants of the program were offered opportunities to share their ideas on different topics of national and international significance. Visits to consulates of Indonesia and Iran were organized to provide them opportunities of learning about the matters of diplomacy.

Students contributed the following articles on important topics which were published in newspapers and online platforms.

1. "Climate Change: An existential threat for developing world" by Ms. Sana Riaz published in The Financial Daily International July 18, 2023
2. "Modi's Visit to The Us and Its Implications for Pakistan" by Ms. Ayiza Salman published on Cover Page <https://coverpage.org/> - July 23, 2023
3. "Impact of Pakistan's Economic Uncertainty" by Ms. Laiba Saleem, published in The Financial Daily International, July 31, 2023
4. "Regional progress and prosperity through CPEC" by Mr. Suresh Kumar published on Cover Page <https://coverpage.org/> August 8, 2023
5. "Growing cities, shrinking farmlands: Challenges of urban sprawl in Pakistan" written by Ms. Alishba Khurshid published in The Financial Daily International August 17, 2023
6. "Morality's Paradox: Unmasking the Contrast Between Professed Values and Practical Diplomacy in International Relations" by Muhammad Muzammil Shaikh, published on Cover Page <https://coverpage.org/> August 17, 2023
7. "Slow Progress and Strategic Promise: A Decade of CPEC" written by Ayiza Salman published on Cover Page <https://coverpage.org/> August 25, 2023
8. Pakistan-ASEAN Relations: Prospects of Growth by Ms. Ayiza Salman published on Cover Page <https://coverpage.org/> September 11, 2023
9. "ASEAN-Pakistan Partnership: Prospects of mutually beneficial cooperation" by Mr. Huzafa Abdulrehman published in The Financial Daily International September 19, 2023



*Group photo of the participants of Youth Access Program with Dr. June Kuncoro Hadiningrat Consul General and Amb. Syed Hasan Habib during visit of the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia.*



*Group photo of the participants of Youth Access Program with H.E. Mr. Hasan Nourian Consul General and Amb Syed Hasan Habib during visit of the Consulate General of the Islamic Republic of Iran.*

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Consul General  
Consulate General of Thailand

**MR. CHA YONG HO**

Counselor, Head of Economic and Trade office  
Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

## Memorandum of Understanding

MoUs signed by Mr. Ahsan Mukhtar Zubairi, Secretary General with foreign think tanks to develop cooperation and partnerships in the field of diplomacy, economy, international relations, and cultural affairs.



Signed MoU with the Belarusian State University, Year 2018.



Signed MoU with The East West Institute, New York, Year 2015.



Signed MoU with Shanghai Institutes For International Studies (SIIS), Shanghai, Year 2014



Signed MoU with National Institute of Strategic Communications (NISC), Year 2016.



Signed MoU with China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, CICIR, Beijing, Year 2015.



Signed MoU with Institute of International Relations. Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Year 2016.



Signed MoU with Observed Research Foundation, Mumbai, Year 2015.



Signed MoU with The Tunisian Institute of Strategic Studies (ITES), Year 2016.



Türkiye

Signed MoU with The Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies (TASAM), Istanbul, Year 2016.



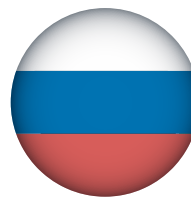
Iran

Signed MoU with Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), Tehran, Year 2016.



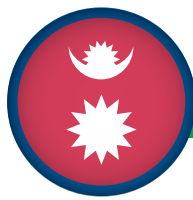
South Korea

Signed MoU with The Sejong Institute, Seongnam, Year 2014.



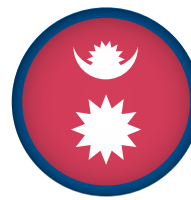
Russia

Signed MoU with The The Russian International Affairs Council, Moscow, Year 2014.



Nepal

Signed MoU with The Nepal Council of World Affairs, Year 2013



Nepal

Signed MoU with The Nepal Institute of Policy Studies, Kathmundu Year 2012.



Egypt

Signed MoU with The Egypt Council for Foreign Affairs, Cairo, Year 2012.



Azerbaijan

Signed MoU with the Center for Analysis of Economic Reforms and Communication (CAERC), Year 2023.

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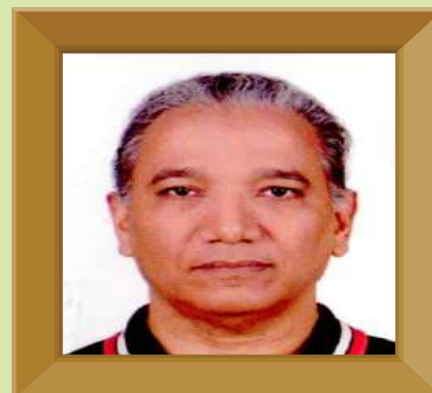
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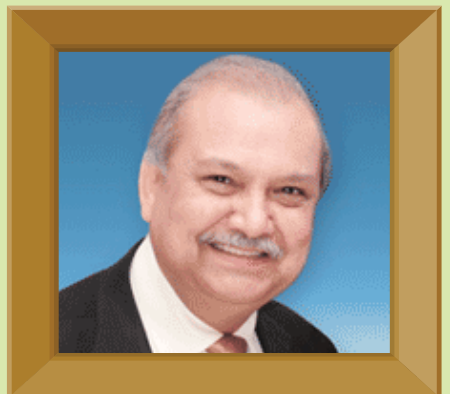
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**Mr. Mian Jehangir Shahid**  
Chairman & Founder  
Leopards Courier Services Pvt. Ltd

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**Mr. Khalid Feroz Arfeen**  
Director  
Arfeen International Pvt Ltd

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**Mr. Aziz Memon**  
Chairman  
Kings Group

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**Dr. Farhan Essa Abdullah**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Dr. Essa Laboratory & Diagnostic Centre



Mr. Atif Iqbal, CEO of HIGH-Q Pharmaceuticals & Vida Laboratories, was born in 1972 with an entrepreneurial spirit. In 1994, he started his career working from root level in the family business, HIGH-Q International (an import base pharmaceutical company), under the chairmanship of his father, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed. Mr. Atif Iqbal finished his MBA program while working and getting real business experience. In 2007, the HIGH-Q Pharmaceuticals manufacturing plant was established. In 2015, Vida Laboratories, a nutraceutical sister concern of HIGH-Q Pharmaceuticals, was built.

Mr. Atif Iqbal is an exceptional communicator and industrial management specialist. He is IBA-certified in cGMP and PQCA certified in environmental safety. He is generally linked with well-known universities of pharmacy, engineering, medicine and nursing in Karachi, where he has participated as a guest of honor and a guest speaker. As a supporter of research, technology and artificial intelligence.

Mr. Atif launched the HIGH-Q Simulation Centre, a revolutionary initiative, exclusively led by HIGH-Q Pharmaceuticals that is revolutionizing healthcare training. It offers a realistic and immersive environment for healthcare professionals to enhance their skills and expertise. The use of simulation is a cutting-edge medical technology that enables healthcare professionals to practice coordinated responses to real-world situations without endangering patients.

Mr. Atif has been on various TV talk shows, healthcare-awareness media programs, seminars and events and he is engaged in a variety of pharma business and social forums. Mr. Atif believes in emerging fresh talent and regularly engages in sports programs such as cricket, hockey and football to support Pakistani young talent. He also has a charitable side and assists the less fortunate.



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