



NEWSLETTER

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One-Day Workshop

Optimizing CPEC Connectivity - Region and Beyond



A one-day workshop titled "Optimizing CPEC Connectivity - Region and Beyond" was organized by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on April 26, 2017 at IPRI Conference Hall, Islamabad. The workshop focused on the following main themes:

- CPEC: Prospects for Promoting Intra-regional Connectivity in South Asia
- CPEC: A Tool for Enhancing Inter-regional Connectivity with Central Asia and Russia
- CPEC Connectivity: Opportunities for Countries of West Asia and Middle East

Dr. Ashfaq Hasan Khan, Dean, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Islamabad chaired the workshop. Participants of the workshop included professional experts, practitioners, scholars and academicians.

The aim of the workshop was to analyze the impact of Economic Corridors over regional and trans-regional connectivity, discuss the potential regions that could be made part of the CPEC connectivity and establish a correlation between economic sustainability and social prosperity through mobility and connectivity in today's world. The workshop deliberations and the input of the speakers and discussants also brought forth a number of policy recommendations. Following are the salient points:

- Over the years, it is observed that China has been engaging countries geoeconomically, incentivizing regional economic integration. In order to understand the entire concept of OBOR including CPEC and philosophy behind China's development strategy, there is a need to understand Chinese culture. China believes that 'a state's prosperity is dependent upon its neighbor's prosperity'. Given the critical analysis of OBOR, it can be seen that China has made an effort to connect the regions

together in an economic chain thereby, strengthening its neighbors and connecting almost 40% of the world population now.

- While analyzing the importance of Economic Corridor in the context of regional connectivity and peace, it was stated that Economic Corridors (ECs) are viewed as 'game changers' globally. It was underscored that the economic corridors strengthen intra-regional connectivity, enhance trade, investment, provide job incentives and encourage people-to-people contacts.
- While referring to the South-Central link, it was said that to accrue benefits from regional connectivity, the SAARC-Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme needs to be established. The signing of Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA) among China, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan was also regarded as a positive development. The agreement would reduce costs of trade between Central and South Asia through timely implementation.
- While discussing inclusion of Afghanistan and India in regional connectivity framework, the expansion of Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) was suggested. On Pakistan-India regional cooperation, both countries' Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) membership was seen positively. However, it was pointed out that the intra-regional trade in the SAARC region has remained to be discouraging, over the decades. Due to the perception biases and conflicts, SAARC as a region has failed to grow. It was recommended that Pakistan must play the lead role in promoting regional harmony and connectivity.
- It was also opined that China's economic prowess (unlike the West) has remained to be a balancer in the region. Fundamentally, the aim of Chinese-led "Silk Road Economic Belt", the "Maritime Silk Route" (often termed as the One Belt One Road OBOR) and the "Vision for 21st Century Eurasian

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Connectivity” is to create strategic channels, trade, and industrial hubs. While dilating upon the Western biasness towards Pakistan in the context of the “New Silk Route”, it was said that the maps circulated by the foreign scholars did not show Pakistan’s strategic positioning. However, the emergence of the CPEC had nullified such perceptions. Strategically, the corridor would not only enhance China’s access to the markets of South Asia, Central Asia, and Middle East but would also give an impetus to Pakistan’s struggling economy and strengthen Islamabad’s regional positioning.

- Geographically, the CPEC would also be beneficial for both Pakistan and China as more than half of Western China is physically located near to Pakistan’s Arabian Sea coastline, than to East Chinese coast line. More so, the CPEC would reduce 80% distance, 75% time, and 70% cost of shipment for China. Through CPEC, Pakistan could create 2 million direct and indirect jobs to harness the demographic dividend, the country has. So far, a dozen Chinese companies have invested US\$ 14 billion and 16 out of 30 projects are nearing completion by March 2018. There is now going on “more construction in Pakistan than in whole of Europe”. It is only through CPEC, China could become a “Two Ocean Power”.

- While referring to Iran’s geopolitical standing, it was remarked that Pakistan must have good ties with Iran.

The Pakistan-Iran bilateral trade currently stands at US\$ 1 billion which is likely to increase upto US\$ 5 billion in the next five years which needs to be taken further. More so, it was opined that CPEC being a strategic corridor could connect China’s Western provinces with the Middle East thereby, making it world’s largest hub by connecting Iran, Afghanistan, the five Central Asian countries, Russia, India, East Africa, Europe, and other countries as well as regions.

- It was also viewed that the old world order that was dictated by the Western world is on decline and a new world order is in the making. This new world order is the result of connectivity between Europe and Asia whose major player is China for its enhanced economic growth and stability as compared to other Asian countries. The only thing that is needed is the better realization of the prospects of the CPEC as a complete roadmap of the future and start of new era of equal economic prosperity.

Major Recommendations

In the light of the views expressed by the eminent participants, the following recommendations were put forth:



Dr. Vaqar Ahmed

Ambassador (R) Syed Hasan Javed

Dr. Nazir Hussain

Optimizing CPEC Connectivity

- Any corridor’s socio-economic rate of return hinges upon increased cross-border engagement between business communities for which, Pakistan should make a conscious effort to link the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region together. With massive opportunity for connectivity among regions of Central Asia, Middle East, and Europe, CPEC is bound to play a defining role in the economic development of the South Asian region.



Dr. Ashfaque Hasan Khan, Session Chair while receiving Memento

- CPEC alone can help complement regional connectivity initiatives of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) countries, if connected to the already established routes in the regions. The CAREC corridors and major seaports could provide regional states access to the global markets in order to deliver services that will be important for national and regional competitiveness, productivity, employment, mobility, and environmental sustainability. It is through the search of common goals of development, these regions can be integrated into a web of infrastructural and energy networks through projects such as CASA-1000, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, Iran-Pakistan (IP) gas pipeline, and the CPEC.
- In order to enhance the intra and inter-regional trade among countries and regions, Pakistan being member must revise and operationalize the already existing trade agreements including Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA), Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA), and South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) on previously defined lines. The focus must be on creating more transit routes thereby, providing easy border crossings for neighboring countries alongside the reduction in trans-shipment and intermediary stops. A timely implementation of this agreement can significantly benefit Pakistan in terms of reduction in the costs of trade inside and outside the region. For instance, Tajikistan has already requested the extension of APTTA upto Dushanbe in order to secure alternate routes for its food supplies via Karachi and Gwadar ports, which could only be possible through timely revision and implementation of the agreement.
- The establishment of economic corridors can also be instrumental in harnessing peace and development in the region as their success lies in the increased intra-regional trade and investments, people-to-people engagement, and other interdependencies through the creation of integrated infrastructural networks across regions and countries. A timely implementation of these regional commitments can complement CPEC and turn it into a peace corridor.
- In order to ensure success of the CPEC as a regional corridor, the government of Pakistan must streamline and implement the ideas of tax and tariff regime, expansion of business activity across the country, trade facilitation and regulation alongside the availability of construction permits, and easy access to utility resources to the foreign and local investors.

- Region and Beyond

- Through extraordinary diplomatic maneuvering, Pakistan must make effective use of “South Asia Motor Vehicle Agreement” to connect CPEC with two road corridors under South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC). These are part of the Asian Highway-2 in which the first corridor connects Nepal and Bangladesh via India and the Asian Highway-48 will connect India, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. The initiative would basically help in creating ten major road corridors across the region.
- The success of economic corridors is highly dependent upon the investment it attracts and establishment of sound infrastructure and complementary frameworks, bounding countries and regions together in trade and commercial regions. In terms of CPEC, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are considered the backbone of the regional economic integration, envisaged in the initiative. It is important to plan the location of those SEZs designed under the CPEC framework keeping in view the pre-requisites so that they could contribute positively in engaging South Asian countries.
- At the national level, there is a dire need to introduce reforms internally. The Government of Pakistan should invest in capacity-building at the administrative and management levels alongside the introduction of infrastructural reforms and assurance of complete transparency.
- Pakistan has a cheap labor intensive market and in the background of increased industrial relocation across the globe, there lies immense opportunities for our labor to be engaged. In this regard, Ministry of



Manpower and Human Resource Development must initiate programmes aimed at the capacity and skill building of labors so that they can compete with the international demands and standards.

- A heavy proportion of the Chinese investment has been allocated to the energy sector to meet the shortfall and industrial needs of the country under the CPEC. However, in order to benefit maximum from the venture, the focus must be on the upgradation of the system, which could bear the energy addition with minimal transmission and distribution line losses. Also, the authorities should plan projects keeping in view the growing concerns regarding climate change specifically when the larger part of energy will be generated through the consumption of coal as reported.
- The Government and relevant departments must also initiate a large-scale outreach effort towards mitigating apprehensions of local communities in the areas of Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan. It is important that people in both regions should be helped in foreseeing gains from public investment and cooperation with China and other friends of Pakistan. Instead, the efficacy and awareness campaign must target people in those areas who can invest in the project thereby, streamlining them as a vital part of national growth.

Pakistan's Foreign Policy and Emerging Geo-political Situation: Opportunities and Constraints

Professor Dr. Syed Rifaat Hussain, Chairman, Department of Government and Public Policy, National University of Science and Technology (NUST) visited IPRI to deliver a lecture on 'Pakistan's Foreign Policy and Emerging Geo-political Situation: Opportunities and Constraints' on April 28, 2017.

While discussing the emerging geo-political situation in South Asia, Dr. Hussain said that geo-strategic environment is constantly evolving. However, the determinants of this geo-strategic environment are constant and they play an essential and crucial role in shaping the foreign policy of any country. On elements on national power in Pakistan, while referring to Cline's formula, it was said that national power of any state can be measured through estimating economic output, military capability, strategic purpose, territory, national will and population, theoretically. However, in the specific case of Pakistan, two important features of the important formula i.e. strategic purpose and collective will are missing.

Pakistan and Geo-strategic Environment

As discussed above, there are constant determinants of national power, which shape the foreign policy of any country. The major determinants shaping Pakistan's foreign policy are geography, regional and global environment, perception or image of Pakistan as a state, economy and Indian assertion for regional supremacy. In terms of Geography, Pakistan has been confronted with the issue of

contested borders since its inception. Similarly, the continuous evolution of regional and global environment alongside the occurrence of strategic realignments, present another challenge which requires Pakistan to adopt a cautious approach in the long term. The issue of Afghanistan's instability, Indian aggression and regional rapprochement and emergence of CPEC are basic contours of a complicated regional situation at the moment. More so, the continuous Indian aggression and Pakistan's efforts to normalize the relations for regional stability present to us another imbalanced equation. Primarily, the Indian propaganda at the global level alongside the war against terrorism have further tarnished Pakistan's image. In the regard, Pakistan must focus on such campaigning strategies which could show Pakistan as a resilient nation who has fought against terrorism bravely. From economic perspective, the situation has improved in recent past which needs to be sustained in the future by maintaining



Russian Perceptions on Afghanistan's Peace Process: A Way Forward

In-House Discussion With Foreign Scholar



Mr. Andrew Korybko, Correspondent Sputnik, News Agency and Radio visited Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on April 17, 2017 to deliver a talk on "Russian Perceptions on Afghanistan's Peace Process: A Way Forward", which was followed by a question and answer session. The discussion was attended by IPRI research staff and scholars.

Mr. Andrew Korybko while referring to the Afghan situation regarded chaos and division among Afghan ethnic factions and presence of terrorist outfits, in particular Daesh as the internal and external elements which heightened the security concerns. While discussing the role of foreign and domestic actors in Afghanistan, he opined that the possibility of any cooperation among the state stakeholders and the Kabul-Taliban talks could be pivotal to the Afghan peace process. The Kabul government has already opposed the idea of talks with Taliban, designating them as "terrorists". He said that Russia has supported talks with the Taliban with the

perspective that Taliban must be pursued for talks as they are the one entirely against the Daesh in Afghanistan. He further added that the recently held Moscow led talks focused on peaceful settlement of Afghan situation. For the peace process to move forward, the state stakeholders and the Afghan government will have to give their obstinate stance and look for common ground for negotiations with other factions.

While supporting negotiations in Afghanistan, he reiterated that Daesh is a common factor between Kabul and Taliban, and this could be a fulcrum of prospective positive interaction. The ideal scenario would be if both Kabul and the Taliban indirectly coordinate their anti-terrorist actions

with one another through some of the intermediary states present at the negotiations. Subsequently, zones of control could unofficially be delineated and this could set the foundation for a ceasefire and the path to a political settlement.

To facilitate indirect talks between Kabul and Taliban, a state could play the role of a 'neutral intermediary'. He said that Russia's role in 'Astana Tripartite Model' (Russia, Turkey and Iran) in Syria did prove instrumental in generating talks and setting the framework for a political solution to the conflict. Russia could be a mediatory in Kabul-Taliban talks as well, and could bring the regional stakeholders (Pakistan, Iran, India and Central Asian Republics) to table. While sharing Russian perception, it was said that the situation in Afghanistan requires a political solution (not military) which can now be initiated through prospective Kabul-Taliban cooperation against the global evil Daesh.

Conclusion

The materialization of CPEC and Afghan peace are both central to regional connectivity. Without peace in Afghanistan, the Central-South link cannot be established. The shared vision of progress and development can be the pushing factors behind regional connectivity and Afghan peace. The hostile elements would try to demonize the concept of corridor and abet instability in Afghanistan. To frustrate such disgruntled moves, cooperation at the regional level is required. There is a need to engage with the regional actors strategically and making them partners (not enemies). The expanded think tanks cooperation can be useful in this regard.

Pakistan's Foreign Policy and Emerging Geo-political Situation: Opportunities and Constraints

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an exponential pace. From security perspective, the successful military offensives against terrorists and signing of CPEC with China are strategic bedrocks for Pakistan to capitalize



upon in future. India would remain to be a major national security threat however; Pakistan must align its words with acts and pursue policies which could best serve its national interests. Major future opportunities for Pakistan lies in the prospective drawdown of coalition forces from Afghanistan, resurgence of Russia, Chinese increased stakes in Pakistan after announcement of CPEC and Iran's changing positive behavior. As a result, Pakistan would be able to enjoy greater diplomatic options as compared to the past, which will help it in stabilizing its economy and improving its international image.

TWO-DAY
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

On

Achieving Peace in Afghanistan: Challenges and Prospects



Organized by

Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI)

in Collaboration with

Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF), Germany (Pakistan Office)

Date: May 10-11, 2017

Venue:
Serena Hotel, Islamabad

Interaction with Italian Delegation



An Italian Ce.S.I. Delegation comprising of Professor Andrea Margelletti, Chairperson, Center for International Studies (Ce.S.I.), Rome, Italy, Mr. Gabriele Lacovino and Ms. Francesca Manenti visited IPRI on April 25th, 2017 to interact with IPRI Scholars. In his opening remarks, IPRI team leader said that IPRI is pleased have Italian Delegation to discuss issues of vital importance.

While discussing Pakistan's counter-terrorism and extremism efforts, IPRI scholars said that in the aftermath of massive losses, Pakistan has adopted a two-pronged strategy to fight the menace of terrorism. Under the hard approach, military operations have been conducted in the tribal areas alongside the launch of a comprehensive National Action Plan (NAP) by the Government of

Pakistan. It was added that NAP is a national response to the threat of extremism/terrorism. It is a comprehensive document having consensus of all political parties and the military to root out the menace of terrorism from Pakistan. NAP combines both hard and soft approaches with responsibilities defined for all government ministries and departments, the military, intelligence agencies and it also seeks cooperation from the people of Pakistan to fight terrorism.

Under the soft approach, the government has introduced vigorous development activities and economic incentives for the rehabilitation and reintegration of militants and also for the internally displaced people (IDPs). As a part of its counter-terrorism strategy, Pakistan is undertaking several de-radicalization and rehabilitation programmes throughout the country which include: the Sabaoon Center for Rehabilitation (sabaoon is the first ray of light at dawn), Mishal, Sparley, Rastoon, Pythom, and Heila. The objectives of these programmes is to educate detainees through formal and corrective religious education, vocational training, counseling and therapy alongside the discussion about social issues with the families of the students.

While discussing the issues of global security, a representative of Italian Delegation pointed Daesh as a threat to the Italian National Security. It was said that Daesh is more than a militant organization with its complete system, organizational structure and clear strategy. It was regarded as more powerful than other terrorist organizations seen over the past decades, having the appeal and ability to continuously attack regions particularly Europe.

Furthermore, the Italian scholars appreciated the commendable work of Pakistan's military and Intelligence Agencies in the fight against terrorism. In order to strengthen Pakistan-Italy relations, the Italian team leader suggested that the academia of both countries should play an important role in this regard. It was said that Pakistan needs to project itself positively in Italy and must work on common grounds and projects, policy papers, analysis and exchange of people to have better people-to-people contacts as well. Bilateral cooperation between both countries must also be extended by collaborating on de-radicalization programmes and strategies.

Recent IPRI Publication

IPRI JOURNAL Winter 2017 Vol. XVII, No. 1

- 1 The Role of Leadership in Foreign Policy: A Case Study of Russia under Vladimir Putin
Dr. Nazir Hussain and Fatima Shakoor
- 2 Nuclear Mainstreaming Pakistan
Dr. Tughral Yamin
- 3 SAARC Summits 1985-2016: The Cancellation Phenomenon
Dr. Manzoor Ahmad
- 4 Geostrategic Transformation: Pakistan's Options for Deterrence and Strategic Posturing
Dr. Zulfiqar Khan
- 5 New Trends of US Policy toward South Asia: Challenges to CPEC
Dr. Chunyang Jia
- 6 Health Security Governance and Zoonotic Diseases in Pakistan: The International Health Regulations (2005) Angle
Dr. Amir Ullah Khan and Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal



Islamabad Policy Research Institute

The Journal is available for free download at:
<<http://www.ipripak.org/winter-2017-volume-xvii-number-1/>>

Pakistan's Nuclear Diplomacy

Ms. Sobia Paracha, Resident Consultant, delivered a lecture on the topic, "Pakistan's Nuclear Diplomacy."

Following are the salient points of the discussion:

- Pakistan's nuclear diplomacy is a vast theme whose fringes cannot be fully touched in a time limit session. Rather, it is a subject which continuously evolves and requires an incessant discourse to analyze developments. In order to form knowledge base of the scholars, the lecture addressed aspects such as how the program evolved over various decades and what were different influences and compulsions on the program that shaped Pakistan's nuclear diplomacy since the 1950s until now. As the changes in the program occurred, Pakistan's nuclear diplomacy also evolved from a vision of a world without nuclear weapons to advocating and justifying for a strictly security driven nuclear weapons development program.

Pakistan's Nuclear Diplomacy (1950 - 2017)

- During the 1950 and 1960s, there was a certain degree of ambivalence attached to acquisition of nuclear weapons. Pakistan actively participated in the Conference on Disarmament, for the negotiations of PTBT (Partial Test Ban Treaty) and even the NPT (Non-proliferation Treaty). Pakistan was one of the founding members of the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and also initiated nuclear cooperation with the US under Atoms for Peace program. The overall emphasis during this era was to invest in nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.
- The decade of 1970s began with the war in East Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh. The trauma of 1971 and inane sense of insecurity vis-à-vis a conventionally superior India pushed Pakistan more towards the development of nuclear weapons. It was remarked that Pakistan will develop the bomb at any cost, which terms that period as the era of defiance specifically against the international non-proliferation regime which had begun to tighten its control measures. Moreover, the NSG was created in the aftermath of Indian nuclear test in 1974. More so, massive international pressures on Pakistan's agreement with other states induced the perceptions of international double treatment and discrimination. But still, Pakistan tried to keep the door open diplomatically by proposing that India and Pakistan could jointly sign the NPT and make South Asia a NWFZ (Nuclear Weapons Free Zone).
- By the mid 1980s, Pakistan had acquired the capability to produce fissile material and conducted several cold tests. In the absence of a direct dialogue with India on the nuclear issues, India and Pakistan resorted to nuclear signaling in the late 1980s. Besides, in the aftermath of the operation Brass-tacks and Exercise Zarb-i-Momin, the nuclear dimension to any war in South Asia became clear. Both India and Pakistan signed various CBMs for risk reduction, one of which is the agreement on non-attack at the nuclear facilities of each other. A list of declared nuclear installations is exchanged every year and this CBM has been able to stand the test of time and various crises.
- The decade of 1990s is marked by the existential deterrence between India and Pakistan. It is generally considered as the golden era for nuclear non-proliferation and arms control. However, in South Asia both India and Pakistan, while supporting CTBT throughout the negotiation process failed to sign the treaty. More so, India conducted its second series of nuclear tests in 1998, which provoked Pakistan to test also.
- The decade of 1990s intensified Pakistan's sense of alienation and International double standards on non-proliferation. Both India and Pakistan were sanctioned after the tests. Pakistan's economy was hit hard given its dependence on foreign aid. The Lahore process had begun pretests and was continued after the tests. The Lahore MoU remained the bedrock of all the future CBMs that were signed by India and Pakistan on nuclear matters.
- From 2000 to 2017, after overt nuclearization in 1998, Pakistan's stance on nuclear weapons and other treaties became more clear and concrete. An overarching vision for the role of nuclear weapons in international security matters was missing due to a narrow focus on national security and the need for strategic balancing with India. This period is marked by consolidation of the program and understanding of nuclear weapons' employment and deployment roles. Pakistan and India signed several CBMs and Risk Reduction Measures that have stood the test of time.
- Apart from non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and nuclear safety and security also came at the center of the international nuclear agenda. Pakistan adopted a proactive policy vis-à-vis both these and engaged actively with the international community on these matters. Pakistan fully supported the UNSCR 1540 and has been submitting reports to the committee on matters related to national export control regime. Pakistan has actively engaged with international community to clear suspicions on its capacity to secure its nuclear complex and subsequently many world leaders have agreed that Pakistan's nuclear weapons are in responsible hands. Pakistan actively participated in the international nuclear security agenda and Obama Administration's Nuclear Security Summit Process, under which Pakistan has also created regional nuclear security center of excellence.
- In the last decade, there has emerged a new debate in the international regime which questions the very holistic nature of the regime if four out of nine Nuclear Weapons States are to be kept outside the non-proliferation regime. More so, there is a set of criteria that is propagated by Western non-proliferation thinkers that needs to be met by Pakistan to become a member of the NSG which thereby, grants legitimacy to Pakistan's nuclear weapons status. The conditions like lifting of ban from the FMCT negotiations and signing of the CTBT etc. are still considered by Pakistan to be discriminatory in nature as they will freeze the strategic asymmetry between India and Pakistan.



SCO Enlargement: Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan

Ms. Amna Ejaz Rafi, Assistant Research Officer, delivered a presentation on the topic, "SCO Enlargement: Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan."

Following are the salient points of the discussion:

- In the globalized world of today, where terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, border security and environmental degradation have altered the security landscape of the world, multilateral approaches are being employed to address the transnational challenges. A number of regional as well as international organizations have emerged on the world stage, wherein, the political actors in pursuance of economic goals and to counter the security threats opt for multilateral approaches. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is one such organization, wherein, the regional states have endeavored to foster cooperation against transnational challenges. SCO's quest for regional peace is not confined to security only rather, the member countries have engineered economic cooperation also.
- China, Russia and the Central Asian Republics (CARs) are the SCO members. The SCO has expanded its membership, and Pakistan and India have been accepted as members. Both the countries have signed the Memorandum of Obligations (MoOs) for membership. The SCO's emergence and growth is in line with the prevalent trend of regionalism and multilateral approaches. It is hoped that SCO's enlargement with the new South Asian entries will boost regional integration that includes the Central-South region.
- The debate over the SCO's enlargement has gained momentum in the recent years. Security concerns in the region have pushed the idea of expanding the SCO. Challenges from the US drawdown from Afghanistan since 2014, Daesh's increasing footprints and terrorism appears to be the compelling factors. The new entries in the SCO are Pakistan and India. The South Asian players are likely to attain the full membership of the organization in the upcoming SCO summit, scheduled in Astana, Kazakhstan (June 8-9, 2017). The membership of Pakistan and India in SCO would expand the organization's zone of influence in South, towards the warm waters of Indian Ocean. After the expansion, the SCO will have four nuclear power states and three of the emerging world economies within its folds.
- Pakistan became an Observer at SCO in 2005. As an observer, Pakistan has been a regular participant in the organization's meetings. Pakistan applied for SCO's full membership in 2010. The SCO Heads of State Council (HoSC) meeting of SCO member states in Ufa, Russia, in July 2015 decided to grant membership to Pakistan in principle and invited it to start the process of becoming full member. This process is presently underway. Pakistan has ratified all 34 agreements of SCO, and is in the process of completing all procedures for becoming a member. The process essentially entails the following three steps: a) Signing and subsequent ratification of the Memorandum of Obligations (MoO), b) Acceding to 34 SCO Instruments (Charter, Treaty, Agreement & Conventions etc.) and c) Formal entry of Pakistan at the SCO HoSC meeting that follows the

completion of above two steps. Pakistan has completed the first two steps. SCO Secretariat is now completing other formalities including ratification of Pakistan's MoO by member states.

- With prospective inclusion of Pakistan in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), following are the key opportunities that could impact the country's social, security and political landscape. Terrorism, Afghan stability and regional connectivity are the areas where Pakistan can cooperate with the SCO states. Pakistan's experience in countering terrorism and the SCO's anti-terrorism structure (Regional Anti-Terror Structure-RATS) can complement each other in similar regard. Pakistan can also discuss the issue of cross border terrorism on the SCO platform. More so, the SCO platform which includes all the major regional stakeholders could provide an opportunity to discuss the Afghan situation.
- Pakistan's geo-strategic location gives it an added advantage. The upcoming CPEC will connect China, Pakistan, Central Asia, Caucasus and Russia. This will also provide Pakistan with strategic alternate (other than West). Pakistan can improve ties with Russia and China, and evolve measures to restore the regional balance of power (the US-India strategic partnership).
- Besides, with the potential inclusion of Pakistan and India in the SCO, it would be incumbent on both the states to put aside their differences and work towards a securer region. According to the SCO Charter "the member states should not have an active military conflict, and work towards stabilizing the border regions, while building military trust for maintaining peace and stability." Moreover, the forum could also be useful in dealing with the Indian nefarious designs of terrorism sponsorship in Pakistan.

Conclusion

Pakistan is an emerging economy. The geo-strategic location and bridging of various regions via Pakistan makes it a frontline country for any strategic and economic relationship. Pakistan can reap the benefits of its vital location by becoming an energy and trade corridor for the Central Asia and other SCO member states. Pakistan's membership of SCO will significantly raise the country's profile in the region. Presence of Pakistan and India in the SCO, dealing with regional security and peace could be an opportunity for the South Asian players to set aside their rivalries and explore new convergences and constructive

cooperation. However, to bring the South Asian players to the table to negotiate the resolution of their outstanding disputes, would require high level of diplomatic maneuvering.



Col (R) Muhammad Hanif,
Research Fellow

"India a Spoiler!" (*Pakistan Observer*)
"CPEC would facilitate inter-regional connectivity" (*Pakistan Observer*)



Asghar Ali Shad,
Research Fellow
(Urdu Articles)

"Aag Se Khelta Baharat...!"
(*Daily Pakistan*)
"Kulboshan ko phansi...!"
(*Daily Pakistan*)
"Kamiyabion ka safar jari---!"
(*Daily Pakistan*)
"Almi Baradari..mujrimana khamooshi!"
(*Daily Pakistan*)
"Phir Baharat be niqaab...!"
(*Daily Pakistan*)



Muhammad Munir,
Research Fellow

"Kazakhstan: Paradise for investment"
(*Pakistan Observer*)



Khalid Chandio,
Research Fellow

"Xi Jinping U.S. Trip" (*Regional Rapport*)



Muhammad Nawaz Khan,
Research Officer

"Indian Hegemony & the SAARC Region"
(*The London Post*)

Amna Ejaz Rafi,
Assistant Research Officer

"Divergent Outlook on Afghanistan"
(*The Express Tribune*)



Gulshan Bibi,
Assistant Research Officer

"Kashmir: Peace over war"
(*Pakistan Observer*)

Khurram Abbas,
Assistant Research Officer

"Contours of Pak-UK relations"
(*Pakistan Observer*)



Aymen Ijaz,
Assistant Research Officer

"Revitalising Pak-Romania relations?"
(*Pakistan Observer*)



Maryam Nazir,
Assistant Research Officer

"Trump - Xi Summit"
(*Pakistan Observer*)



Adeel Mukhtar Mirza,
Assistant Research Officer

"Pakistan climate change act: A fillip
To climate action"
(*South Asian Voice*)



Call for Papers IPRI Journal Winter 2018

The IPRI Journal is a biannual peer-reviewed publication of the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI). It is an HEC recognised 'X' category Journal, which is Pakistan's second highest category for Social Science Journals. The objective of the Journal is to produce, foster and disseminate research, policies and ideas, primarily from Pakistan and the Global South, from the fields related to Social Sciences and International Affairs. Research scholars are invited to submit **original, unpublished** articles and book reviews for the **Winter 2018** Issue.

Submission Deadline: September 30, 2017

Papers/articles should be concise and not exceed 8,000 words, including an abstract of 150-200 words. Reviews of recent books by scholars of standing in their field should comprise of 1000 words. Guidelines for Contributors are available at:

<http://www.ipripak.org/category/journals/>

Authors are requested to submit soft copies in MS Word format, a brief bionote as author of no more than 30 words, complete contact address (email as well as postal), telephone and fax numbers to the Editor at:

Email: ipri.editor@gmail.com

Printed copies should be sent to the Institute's postal address.



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