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Abstract

This qualitative study aims to evaluate the influence of the US and the possibility of Pakistan developing strategic relations with Russia in the 21st century. Historical legacies, an overemphasis on Western dependency and Pakistan's Endocentric viewpoint have all tarnished relations between Pakistan and Russia. Although their relationship has had numerous highs and lows, viewing Russia through Indian eyes and Pakistan through a Western lens. In the context of 21st-century regional stability, economic cooperation, and defense collaboration, the research looks at the evolving dynamics of Pakistan's relationship with Russia. PTI's government sought to strengthen economic relations with Russia. Initiatives have been made to explore investment opportunities. However, the Premier visit was not liked by the US which is evident that the foreign policy of Pakistan is influenced by America throughout. Pakistan should establish long-term relations with Russia as a trading partner which may not affect relations US.

Keywords: Pakistan, Russia, USA, Strategic Relations, Multilateralism

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The Dynamics of Pakistan-Russia Relations in the 21st Century and the Role of U.S. Influence

Abstract

This qualitative study aims to evaluate the influence of the US and the possibility of Pakistan developing strategic relations with Russia in the 21st century. Historical legacies, an overemphasis on Western dependency and Pakistan's Endocentric viewpoint have all tarnished relations between Pakistan and Russia. Although their relationship has had numerous highs and lows, viewing Russia through Indian eyes and Pakistan through a Western lens. In the context of 21st-century regional stability, economic cooperation, and defense collaboration, the research looks at the evolving dynamics of Pakistan's relationship with Russia. PTI's government sought to strengthen economic relations with Russia. Initiatives have been made to explore investment opportunities. However, the Premier visit was not liked by the US which is evident that the foreign policy of Pakistan is influenced by America throughout. Pakistan should establish long-term relations with Russia as a trading partner which may not affect relations US.

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Introduction

The connection between Pakistan and Russia in the twenty-first century is examined in this article. First, it gives a quick summary of their shared history, highlighting the reality that Pakistan's ties with Moscow are mostly derived from those with the US. Pakistan made constant efforts to strengthen ties with the Soviet Union as its relations with Washington worsened. Pakistan's strategic status has remained unchanged as a result of these attempts, despite the fact that they occasionally produced immediate gains. The article then concentrates on two potential areas of cooperation:

potential alliances in the fields of defense and security as well as potential connections in the fields of energy and the economy that proponents of optimism see as viable. I think that future collaboration will face numerous obstacles, and the current degree of cooperation is moderate. Geo-economic restrictions provide a huge challenge to the diplomatic efforts of two States that are thousands of kilometers apart and have weak road and rail connections. Over the past thirty years, certain long-standing hurdles have only gotten worse, despite the removal of several that stood in the way of stronger links between Pakistan and the



Soviet Union (Khan, [2021](#)). Moscow and Islamabad could get closer, but that link is probably going to stay small. The paper concludes that it is doubtful that the crisis in Ukraine and its aftermath will fix these basic issues. Instead of siding with the opposite side in these wars, the US could prefer that Pakistan join its side. Therefore, Pakistan's close ties to Russia would not sit well with the US. Already, the US doubts Pakistan's ability to leave the US sphere of influence in light of Putin's unambiguous support for Pakistan's SCO membership. Thus, for no other obvious reason than that it would be strategically advantageous for America to witness a deceleration in the pace of expansion of this connection (Clary, [2022](#)).

The geopolitical and regional landscape that exists now seems to be highly conducive to the growth of relations between Pakistan and Russia. China will not object to the expansion of ties between Pakistan and Russia because it enjoys amicable ties with Russia as well. On the other hand, there's a good chance that this move will be viewed as a helpful hand in pulling Pakistan out of its current economic bind. Although there is a lot of potential to improve Pakistan-Russian relations, there could be some challenges to overcome. This is because the US, a few Muslim nations, and India might not be at ease with this growing alliance and would wish to obstruct development by putting up barriers that they would like to look into (Cookman, [2022](#)).

Historical Background of Pak-Russia Relations

The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, visited Moscow in February 2022. His followers greeted the visit as historic right away. Yes, history books may have discussed it in the past, but maybe not for the reasons Khan anticipated. First, the Khan government was already plagued by political weakness and civil-military conflicts, and the visit exacerbated these issues. Second, Khan played a significant role in the first serious power struggle in Europe in almost two decades, which broke out at the same time that Russia invaded nearby Ukraine (Khan, [2021](#)).

Khan's visit was not a break with the past, despite the publicity. Ever since gaining its independence, Pakistan has appealed to the superpowers for assistance in resolving the structural imbalance within the subcontinent. Even though Pakistan has

been the most successful in winning over the US to its cause, Pakistani officials have frequently questioned if the support was worthwhile given Washington's insistence on policy consistency. Khan's visit was similar to past attempts by other Pakistani presidents to become less dependent on the US and have more flexibility in the international arena through well-publicized liaisons with Moscow. These kinds of moves have proven particularly alluring for Islamabad (and to a lesser degree, Moscow) when US-Indian relations have been on the rise or when US-Pakistan relations have become strained. Pakistani officials have occasionally believed that a widely reported visit to Moscow may persuade Washington to offer greater support, and they have occasionally been right in that assessment (Khan et al., [2023](#)).

Pakistan's relations with Moscow were bad almost immediately. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the country's founder, said that only Russia among all the big nations had not congratulated Pakistan. It's American desire to have good relations with Pakistan because of Pakistan's strategic location, he contended. In addition to his officially expressed opinions, he privately believed that communism could not thrive in the Islamic world. He made it apparent that Pakistan's interests were better served by the United States and the United Kingdom than by Russia. Though many in the Pakistani elite supported Jinnah's ideals, he passed away only a year after the country gained its independence (Qazi et al., [2023](#)).

Russia-US Relations and Pakistan

The US-Russian relationship has been strained for a number of years. Their positions on different global issues do not align with one another. Their main points of contention center on the US proposal to station anti-nuclear missile defense systems throughout Eastern Europe in the face of Russian resistance. There are currently disagreements on how to handle the Syrian crisis as well as Iran's war on Israel. Russia wants both concerns handled through bilateral or multilateral discussions under UN auspices, while the US supports tougher sanctions against Iran and unilateral military action in Syria to back the opposition parties there. Russia and the US have sharp disagreements on the US's development of the worldwide missile defense system. Despite repeated attempts by both nations to "reset" their relations, it was not possible.

Although both sides maintain active diplomatic contacts, there has been no appreciable improvement in relations given the potential threat of further global financial crises, and the 2010 signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (Ali et al., 2023).

Pakistan is of interest to both Moscow and Washington due to its geostrategic significance, especially given the current strained state of ties between the US and Russia. Pakistan is important to Russia because it gives them access to the Gulf and the Arabian Sea, acts as a backdoor to Iran, is where pipeline projects are routed, and acts as a counterbalance to China, India, and Russia, three neighboring nations. Pakistan may also be helpful in assisting the US in keeping at least a semblance of a presence in the area. Russia, for its part, wishes to strengthen its strategic and economic ties with Pakistan in order to collaborate with Pakistan in bringing stability to Afghanistan and the Central Asian area (Munshi, 2022). Russia believes that tight ties with Pakistan will provide it an opportunity to establish a significant presence in South and Central Asia, should the US put undue pressure on Pakistan to step up its efforts in the "war on terror". Additionally, Russia will be able to cross Iran to reach the Straits of Hormuz and the Indian Ocean via the Arabian Sea (Shah et al., 2022).

Russia needs to work towards Pakistan's permanent membership in the SCO as well, given Pakistan's significant assistance in curbing terrorist activity in Central Asia. Furthermore, China and Russia will hold a far larger advantage in the balance of power in the area if Iran, Afghanistan, and India eventually join the SCO. Future ties between Pakistan and Russia appear promising due to these characteristics. Nonetheless, the US might not be pleased with the development of this partnership given its historical strategic ties to Pakistan. Russian foreign policy is in favor of a contemporary collective security framework that has developed by assisting all nations in achieving sustainable social and economic development. In order to remove development inequities, it also seeks to support the economic growth of less developed nations and areas. In order to do this, Russia is following a liberal economic strategy and is not paying much attention to geopolitical restrictions. It is pursuing proactive and focused strategies in the field of international development at the bilateral and multilateral levels by utilizing its donor potential. It seeks to

strengthen ties with every nation in terms of investment and commerce. As a result, Pakistan will find it simpler to establish commercial and economic ties with Russia (Biswas, 2023).

Pakistan-Russia Relations In the 21st Century

The Russian government voiced worry over the destiny of the Prime Minister who visited Moscow in October 1999 and was removed from the Premiership by General Pervez Musharraf. However, Putin quickly succeeded Yeltsin in the position of leader of Russia, and the latter had no ideological issues with the autocratic military. There were no longer any ideological barriers preventing a new alliance between Russia and Pakistan, and both countries looked into potential areas of collaboration. Additionally, Putin expedited the strengthening of Sino-Russian relations that had started in the preceding ten years. Warmer relations between Pakistan and Russia might live peacefully with this China-Russia entente, given the "all-weather friendship" that China and Pakistan share. However, Russia's reluctance to jeopardize the advantages of its long-standing relations with India in order to strengthen ties with Pakistan was always present in the background. This has persisted as a barrier to improved relations between Pakistan and Russia (Hayat, 2023).

In the modern period, experts who are upbeat about the prospects of the Russia-Pakistan relationship typically focus on two aspects. Prior to discussing the advancement of defense and security collaboration, I first examine the potential for considerably closer economic and energy links. However, a thorough analysis of each field reveals as many barriers to collaboration as there are advantages. Power politics, geography, and the economy all continue to work against a genuine relationship between Pakistan and Russia (Khan, 2022).

Economic and Energy Ties

Pervez Musharraf and Putin met in 2000 and 2002 on the fringes of international conferences. Once more, this summit fell short of being revolutionary. The Kremlin highlighted Putin's remarks, which made explicit reference to India, saying the coordination of relations between Pakistan and Russia could not and could not be done at the

expense of Russia's traditional allies. However, one area that the two autocrats pointed out did become better under their direction and has been better ever since Musharraf left.

However, neither Pakistan nor Russia has a significant influence on the other's economy. According to World Bank and International Monetary Fund estimations, Pakistan's economy was only the 63rd-biggest market for Russian exports in 2020, despite potentially being the 44th largest in nominal terms. Russia's economy ranked eleventh in the world that year, but it was only Pakistan's 27th-largest market for its products. Pakistan mostly purchases agricultural goods from Russia. Almost 80 percent of Russian exports to Pakistan are made up of wheat and legumes. In return, Russia purchases minor amounts of citrus (20%) and textiles (55% of Pakistan's total exports to Russia), along with other miscellaneous items. While commerce between farmers in Pakistan and Russia is undoubtedly significant, it doesn't really reflect the relationship's enormous strategic potential (Chia & Haiqi, [2021](#)).

For at least thirty years, Pakistani officials have promised to act as a conduit for energy pipelines. And for at least thirty years, geopolitics has undermined that notion. Although the talk of the 2010s was about an Iran-Pakistan pipeline, throughout the 1990s there was constant discussion and news about pipelines running via Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The design suggested in these visions has varied. Both designs had two variations: one aimed to link the pipelines to India's much bigger economy, while the other envisaged liquifying the natural gas and transporting it from developed Pakistani ports (like Gwadar) or established ones (like Karachi). It makes sense to convert IP into IPI and TAP into TAPI. Pakistan utilized around 3.5 quadrillion BTU in 2019, about a tenth of India's overall energy consumption of nearly 32 quadrillion BTU (Javaid & Rashid, [2020](#)).

Furthermore, the cost and significant initial capital expenditures associated with the liquefaction, transportation, and regasification of natural gas are high. Although pipelines are costly as well, they are often less expensive than LNG infrastructure for short- to medium-distance transportation (Molnar [2022](#)). The upfront capital expenses of pipelines that pass through Pakistan on their way to an LNG terminal or that continue on to

the Indian market would be high, and it would take years if not decades, for investors to recover their investment. Although there is significant uncertainty due to natural gas price volatility, investors have found both TAPI and IPI's politics to be poisonous. After a brief break under the Obama administration, the US has been resolutely committed to imposing sanctions on Iran, discouraging even risk-averse investors like China from funding the Iran-Pakistan project. Furthermore, the TAP route was never able to get past Afghanistan's pervasive insecurity (Javaid & Rashid, [2020](#)).

Russia's intervention in Pakistan's pipeline politics hasn't worked out any better than Pakistan's previous attempts to do this. In three proposed projects, Russia has been invited to help with the construction and technical aspects of long-distance natural gas pipelines that would transport natural gas from other nations to markets in South Asia. In the first instance, Pakistani authorities have openly discussed Russian assistance for a pipeline from Kazakhstan to Pakistan; however, the project would require lengthy routes, and any line that originates in Kazakhstan would have to pass through Afghanistan or Iran, posing the same issues as the TAPI and IPI architectures. Despite reports that during his February 2022 visit to Russia, Prime Minister Imran Khan intended to propose a pipeline with Kazakhstani origins, the project appears to be in its early stages (Clary, [2022](#)).

All of these projects were proposed prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the attack has made none of them more likely. Since the sanctions against Moscow have become more severe and widespread due to the present stresses on the Russian economy, these projects pose a political and economic risk to Pakistan and cast doubt on Russia's readiness to provide financial and technical support. Certain projects, like the CASA-1000 transmission lines, rely primarily on funding from the United States. If Russian involvement in the project is prohibited because of fears about Western sanctions, the already difficult project may become considerably less feasible (Wolff, [2023](#)).

The scenario after 2022 and the events in Ukraine also had an impact on the US pullout from Afghanistan in 2021, which led to the Taliban's return to power. With minimal authority over the countryside, the reestablished Taliban

administration lacks credibility overseas. The ideological similarities between the Afghan Taliban and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan might potentially exacerbate tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As a result, any plan that relies on ground passages from Russia to Central Asia into Pakistan is complicated by the instability in Afghanistan. In the finest years of Afghanistan's post-9/11 recovery, they were dangerous politically and economically. These days, the hazards are too great. Even while economic relations between Russia and Pakistan are not currently strong, there may be room for collaboration if both countries share the goal of controlling that instability. We then go on to that possibility (Shah et al., [2023](#)).

Russia-Pakistan Cooperation on Defense and Security

After 9/11, when Washington insisted that Pakistan back an American-led campaign against the Taliban, Pakistan and the US reluctantly reconciled. Pakistan was reluctant to return to being a frontline state and was even more reluctant to give up on the Taliban because it had been Pakistan's means of achieving its long-term objective of securing a favorable government in Kabul (Qazi & Bashir, [2022](#)). Pakistan buffered this strategic reversal by providing a safe haven to Taliban leaders escaping the US-backed battle to overthrow the government while also providing basing, transit routes, and intelligence to US regional counterterrorist and counterinsurgency operations. Pakistani military and intelligence authorities seem to have understood that Washington's influence in Afghanistan would only be temporary if the Taliban were ousted. Consequently, rather than merely providing a haven of safety, indications of Pakistani assistance for the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network—with whom they were intimately affiliated—started to surface (Tankel [2018](#)).

Since Pakistan was obviously in a position to influence what happened to Afghanistan after 9/11, all of the major extra-regional countries engaged with the Musharraf leadership. In addition to being concerned about signals of instability in Pakistan and fearing for the new administration in Kabul, China, and Russia also wanted to make sure that Afghanistan's long-term course would not endanger their interests. Beijing and Moscow were offended by remarks made by US politicians and officials that

suggested Washington desired more or less permanent military outposts in Central Asia (Ahmed, [2022](#)).

Even with the US's unprecedented dominance in the 1990s and 2000s, regional countries were still able to work together independently of Washington and sometimes even against it. China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan have been meeting since the mid-1990s to discuss issues related to regional security. In addition to discussing in private and public a united fight against national separatism, religious extremism, and international terrorism, the five states denounced in a declaration made at a summit in Dushanbe in 2000 meddling in other states' internal affairs under the guise of "humanitarian intervention" and "human rights protection." The organization changed its name to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, or SCO, in 2001 after adding Uzbekistan (Kotliar et al., [2021](#)).

Russian trips as early as the mid-1990s had suggested that Pakistan could be able to purchase defense equipment from Russia, but these post-Cold War transfers were minor at first, consisting solely of Mi-17 dual-purpose helicopters. For a number of years, Beijing was unable to sell its jointly built FC-1/JF-17 fighter aircraft to Pakistan because Russia would not allow Beijing to use Russian-origin RD-93 jet engines, allegedly in reaction to Indian concerns. However, China remained Moscow's main defense client during the 2000s, and in 2007, Moscow formally approved the RD-93 re-export after bowing to joint pressure from China and Pakistan (Amir-ud-Din et al., [2020](#)).

Notwithstanding these actions, Russian officials did not waste any time in assuring their Indian colleagues that they did not see Russia and Pakistan developing a much more extensive arms connection. In 2012, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin responded to questions from Indian media over possible arms supplies to Pakistan by saying, "We are always cooperating with India to ensure the safety of the region." Unlike other nations in the area, we have never caused problems for India. Spit on someone's face if they say otherwise. He stated, "We don't do military business with your enemies," in a less aggressive manner. We don't give them any weapons (Dikshit [2012](#)).

It's hard to say, given their recentness, if the Mi-35 sales were a warning to New Delhi or just a precursor of things to come. A red line prohibiting the

provision of combat aircraft appears to have been crossed by that helicopter transfer, which Indian authorities believed to apply to the attack helicopter transfer but not necessarily to the dual-use Mi-17s that had been delivered before. Since the 1990s, Pakistan has frequently shown interest in Russian fighter aircraft; nevertheless, nothing even quite as provocative as contemporary fighter systems have been supplied. According to certain rumors, Pakistan may update its T-80 tanks in Russia, which are of Ukrainian origin; however, this would only be a minor modification to the current systems, not the acquisition of a new capability (Pomper & Tuganov, [2023](#)).

The purchase of the Mi-35 was not the only indication of a stronger alliance between Russia and Pakistan; other signs included deteriorating ties between the US and Pakistan about Afghanistan and tense relations between the US and Russia after the Crimean Peninsula incursion in February 2014. The increased visibility of Pakistan-Russian security cooperation matched changes in Russian perceptions of the Taliban. The Taliban had caused Moscow concern when they first appeared in the 1990s. Amid deteriorating US-Russian ties following the 2001 invasion, Russia began to fear an ongoing American presence in Central Asia. The movement became more acceptable to Moscow because of the Taliban insurgency's ability to stop it. Subsequently, starting from the mid-2010s, Russia conveyed to the public a rising sense of anxiety over the threat posed to Russian interests by the Islamic State and its offshoot in Afghanistan, the Islamic State-Khorasan (ISK). Due to the conflict between the Taliban and the ISK, Russian interests became more aligned with the Taliban, and Russian assistance to Pakistan's attempts to encourage talks with the Taliban in the last years of Ghani's Kabul government increased. India remained skeptical the entire time and believed that Russia's intentions for Afghanistan were "at odds" with its own (Bakare, [2021](#)).

The invasion of Ukraine has the potential to disrupt or at least temporarily suspend the modest bilateral defense partnership between Russia and Pakistan. The Russian defense industry may find it more important to re-equip Russian forces than to arm new clients like Pakistan, especially given that it is finding it difficult to manufacture or otherwise get supplies it would have needed from vendors who have now sanctioned Moscow. Given the significant Russian personnel and equipment commitments in Ukraine, it is still unclear if Russia will be able to

continue even its minor drill series with Pakistan. Lastly, it is far from guaranteed that Pakistan will be willing to maintain high-profile ties with the Russian military in this context. The post-Ukraine international economic environment is putting Pakistan's own budgetary condition under severe strain in 2022, which reduces the appeal of any significant defense acquisitions, particularly defense gear made in Russia (Nadim, [2022](#); Mirza, [2022](#)).

Social and Cultural Relations

The governments of the USSR and Pakistan fostered a cooperative relationship in the 1950s by utilizing a variety of cultural and social initiatives, organizing a film festival, and enabling the exchange of cultural enactment sets. Significant technical and financial assistance was provided by the former Soviet Union (USSR), which enhanced Pakistan's social sector, promoted agricultural exports, and helped with disaster relief. In addition, the Soviets were crucial in the founding of a well-known medium-wave station close to Islamabad, which later evolved into the nation's main radio station with the assistance of medium- and short-wave transmitters. But because of the Afghan war, Karachi's Soviet news magazine Tulu stopped publishing in 1982. Up until the 1990s, Karachi, the largest city in Pakistan, had a substantial influx of Soviet visitors thanks to eight daily flights from Moscow. However, this tendency progressively waned as a result of the economic crisis in Karachi and the rise of Dubai as a substitute business hub (Ahmed & Rasool, [2023](#)). Assistance was provided by the Russian Federation to Pakistan during the earthquake in 2005 and the floods in 2010. Every year, determined climbers from Russia and Central Asia are lured to the treacherous K-2 summit, which is welcomed by Pakistan. In addition to serving Pakistani food, the 'Gandhara' restaurant in the Russian Federation showcases Buddha statues from the Gandhara Civilization. The original Russian communities that include over 13 million Muslims have a natural kinship with the Muslims of Pakistan. Punjab University and Moscow State University, both of which have Urdu-speaking faculties, have an agreement in place for student exchanges (Ahmed et al., [2023](#)).

Relations between Pakistan and Russia after the Ukraine Invasion and the American Impact

August 2018 saw Imran Khan becoming prime

Minister of Pakistan. Although he succeeded in strengthening ties with the US towards the conclusion of the Trump administration, he was unable to establish a personal connection with Biden following the latter's inauguration in 2021. Senior people close to Khan seemed to be getting more and more agitated with Biden for not even agreeing to extend the civility of a phone call to Khan. Early in August 2021, Moeed Yusuf, Khan's national security advisor, stated that Pakistan has choices if a phone conversation or a security connection is considered a capitulation. At the end of the month, Khan and Putin made their first of multiple phone conversations public before Khan's journey to Moscow in February 2022, according to announcements from Pakistan and Russia visit was supposed to be Khan's historic moment, but the crisis in Ukraine overshadowed the symbolism, and as Khan arrived in Moscow, Russia invaded Ukraine, entirely destroying any chance of serious cooperation or, at the very least, tangible agreements or deliverables for the public. (Shams, [2022](#)).

Khan, on the other hand, was dealing with a complex domestic political problem that he openly attributed to US resentment over his outreach into Russia. Following his return from Moscow, the crisis resulted in the overthrow of his administration, which Khan ascribed to a plot conducted by the Pakistan Army against him, which he said was driven by the army's desire to allay US fears. The motion for no confidence was successful. Although it is outside the purview of this essay to examine the evidence supporting Khan's claims, the Pakistan Army is not intrinsically antagonistic to Russia. In April 2018, Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief General, visited Moscow and was largely responsible for the relationship's ongoing progress in the following years. General Bajwa felt obliged to criticize the invasion of Ukraine in public, although his words were restrained in their tone (Siddiqui, [2023](#)). According to American scholar Tamanna Salikuddin, Bajwa's remarks about Ukraine during the Islamabad dialogue were obviously intended to appease the US while also leaving room for Russia (Cookman et al., [2022](#)).

But Pakistan's political unrest persisted after Khan's administration fell. The lack of oil and commodities brought on by the Russian invasion was a major contributing factor to the economic catastrophe that the new coalition administration

inherited. The public's affection for Imran Khan and the perception of economic incompetence has left the current administration vulnerable, increasing the likelihood of Imran Khan's comeback (Carry, 2022).

Khan could be attracted by the prospect of rejecting US pressure and re-embracing Russia if he does make a comeback. However, it is hard to predict if Russia would be able to respond in kind. Is Vladimir Putin going to remain the leader? Will the worldwide sanctions regime force Russia's economy to collapse? Will the pressure from the West over Ukraine cause Russia and China to become further closer? Although there are circumstances that increase the likelihood of tighter relations between Pakistan and Russia more than others, great power politics are now too unpredictable to allow for precise forecasting. The official visit of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan to Russia during the height of the Ukrainian crisis has drawn criticism in the United States from certain members of the academic and think tank community in Washington, who blame the visit for Pakistan's irrational policy behavior, bad optics, and poor timing. Khan's visit may or may not be a good idea, but the criticism of the intellectual elite in the United States is indicative of a colonial mindset that runs deep (Nadim, [2022](#)).

Conclusion

Despite several ups and downs throughout the course of their decades-long relationship, Pakistan and Russia have been able to stabilize their relationship. Although ties between Russia and Pakistan were quite chilly when Pakistan was aligned with the United States, Russia attempted to work with Pakistan in the areas of industry and economic growth. Russia developed the Guddu Thermal Power Plant, the Pakistan Steel Mills in Karachi, and the oil and gas development initiatives. Following the 1965 conflict between India and Pakistan, Russia served as a mediator between the two sides and organized the Tashkent Conference in 1966. Russia maintained cordial ties with India during the Cold War and rejected every UN resolution pertaining to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Russia supported India as well in its illegitimate annexation of the Portuguese island of Goa. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation appeared on the global map. In order to maintain an active and

sophisticated deterrent, Russia wishes to maintain control over its military forces and nuclear arsenal. Russia and Pakistan share comparable foreign policies and strategic objectives. As a result, both nations cleared the path for collaboration in the commercial, industrial, and defense sectors. Russia and Pakistan aim to create a precise, accurate, and compact nuclear deterrent. Additionally, they want to equip their armed forces with highly skilled professionals who can operate in any environment or situation. Russia and Pakistan have ushered in a new chapter of cordial bilateral ties. Both nations have engaged in high-level political and strategic exchanges. Legislators from both parties routinely traveled to reputable nations. The two nations' trade links are growing every day. By arranging combined military drills between the armed forces of Pakistan and Russia, military and defense ties are also improving. The two nations are also working together on the development of weapons and in the defense sector.

Pakistan is too tiny to change the makeup of world politics on its own. It must negotiate a framework that has been established by others while trying to get the best bargain it can. Although Pakistan's policy is not wholly reactive, it does require more resources than it can obtain on its own to achieve its long-term strategic goals of competing with India and guaranteeing a non-hostile regime in Afghanistan. Thus, achieving its declared foreign policy objectives calls on both skillful foreign policy and good fortune. Russia's relations with Pakistan may strengthen while those with India are likely to deteriorate if Russia turns out to be China's de facto client state. However, Moscow's own prominence in international politics will decline due to its errors in Ukraine, which would limit Russia's capacity to

assist Pakistan independently. Otherwise, the relationship between Russia and Pakistan is likely to stay mostly as it has for some time: a small source of technology, armaments, and assistance that Pakistan may develop when ties with Washington soured. Pakistan's condition has not changed in the past and is not expected to change in the future due to the relationship between Russia and Pakistan. Russia does not provide a way out of Pakistan's complex geopolitical problems. Moscow cannot do so, according to those who deny the geopolitical and geo-economics limitations that Pakistan and Russia face in the twenty-first century.

Recommendations

The aforementioned study demonstrates that despite reasonable obstacles, Pakistan and Russia are both persuaded and committed to improving their relations. Policymakers may find the following proposals useful in this context:

Pakistan should initiate talks with Russia to build strategic cooperation at the proper time.

Pakistan should endeavor to position Russia as a long-term commercial partner and supplier of military gear.

Assurance should be given to the Pentagon that bilateral relations between Pakistan and Russia would not be harmful to the US.

An attractive offer should be given to Russian Businessmen for maximum investment in Pakistan. It is incorrect to see Pakistan's relations with Russia as an assault on any third nation. In accomplishing this objective, Pakistan needs to consider the strategic and economic interests of Saudi Arabia and China.

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