

**Question:** Discuss the role and significance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) with reference to its recent meeting in Pakistan. What are the current challenges faced by the SCO, and why is the organization important for Pakistan and other member countries?

## Answer

### 1. Introduction:

SCO Summit : A symbolic measure at reducing regional tensions

The SCO, a multilateral organization founded to foster cooperation on security, economic, and political fronts among its member states, has evolved to address issues ranging from trade and counter terrorism to infrastructure development. Its recent meeting holds immense geopolitical significance for both the Pakistan and the broader South Asian region.

“The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is not just a regional alliance; it's a symbol of a new era of multilateral cooperation.”

Zhang Ming, Secretary General, SCO.

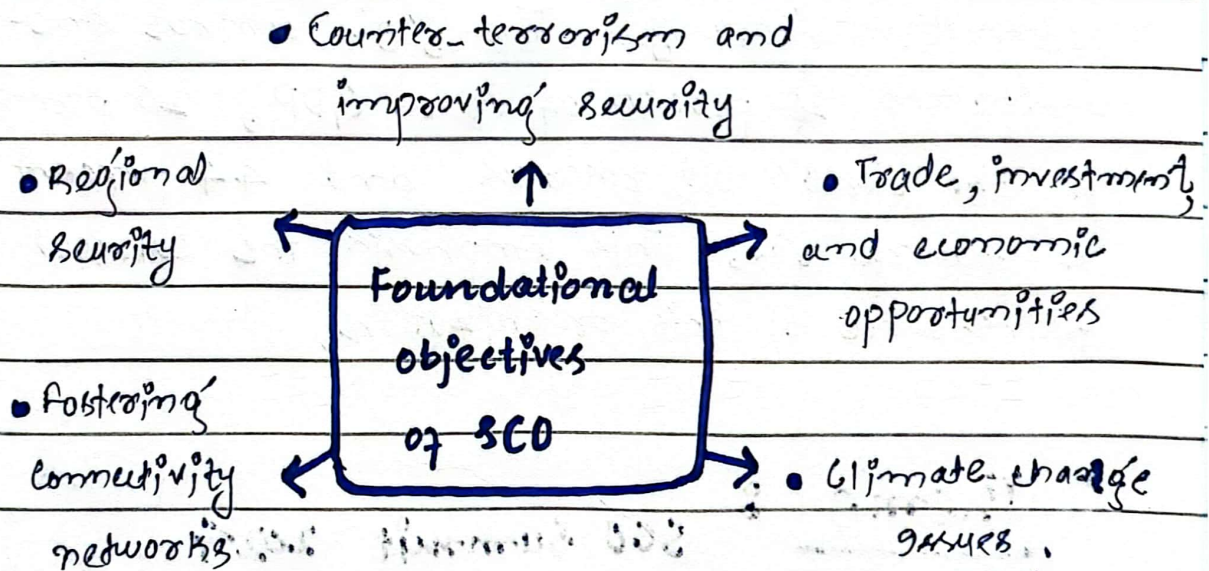


## 2. SCO:

A regional intergovernmental organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional intergovernmental organization founded in 2001 in Shanghai. It evolved from "Shanghai Five" group, established in 1996. It includes China, Russia, India and Pakistan among its 10 members.

### → What it Entails?



According to the SCO Charter, the organization seeks, "to promote regional peace, security, and stability and create a new international political and economic order."



## A. Significance it Holds:

As stated by the former president of Kazakhstan,

"The leaders seated at this negotiation table are representatives of half of humanity."

The SCO, with 80 percent of the Eurasian landmass, and 40 percent of the world's population, holds the largest regional cooperation globally. The SCO's control encompasses 20 percent of the GDP, 20 percent of the world's oil reserves and 44 percent of natural gas. This emphasizes the colossal significance of this organization.

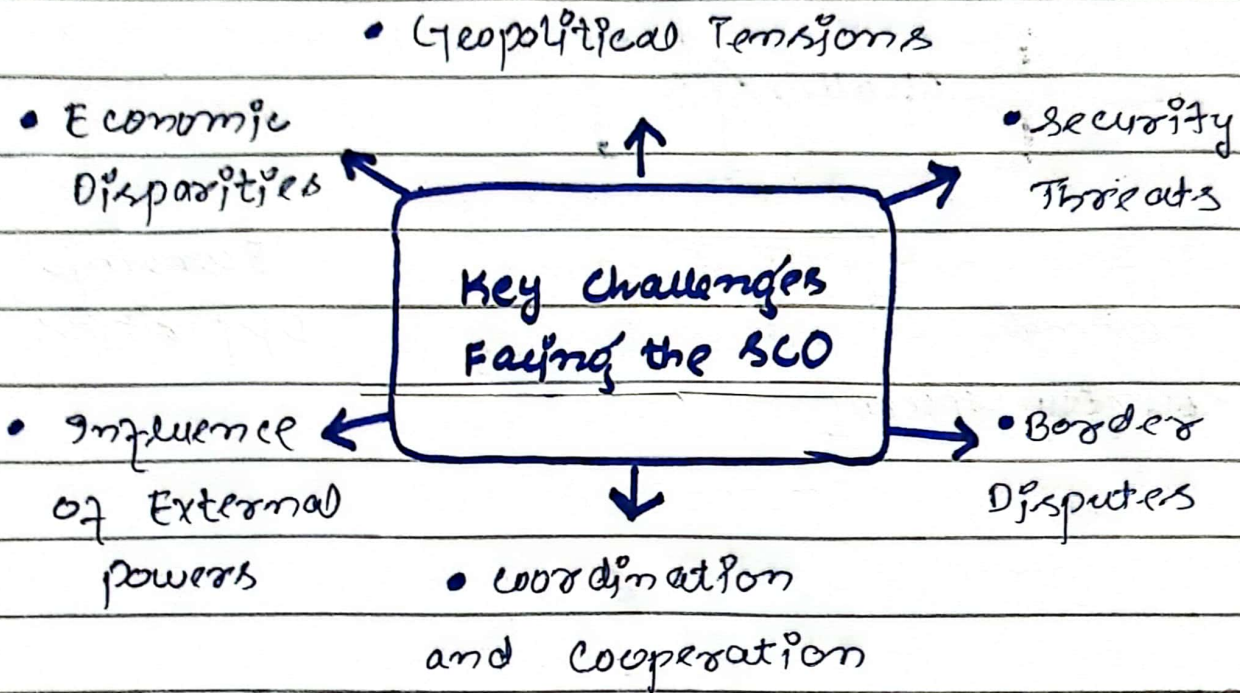
## Theme : SCO Summit 2024

"strengthening multilateral dialogue; striving towards a sustainable peace and prosperity."



### 3. Challenges :

Navigating Security, Geopolitics, and Economic Disparities



### a. Geopolitical Rivalries

• India-Pakistan Tensions : Ongoing disputes between both countries including issues over Kashmir and cross border terrorism, hinder collaborative initiatives within SCO.

• China-India Disputes : Recent border confrontations between



China and India have strained their relationship, adding complexity to the SCO's dynamics.

## b. Diverse National Interests

- Economic Disparities: members differ in their economic development levels and interests, which can lead to challenges in implementing unified economic policies or initiatives.

- Security Concerns: while some nations prioritize counter-terrorism efforts, others may focus more on border security or regional stability, leading to differing approaches within the organization.

## c. External Pressure

- Global Geopolitical Shifts: The evolving global political landscape



including conflicts like the Russia - Ukraine war, impacts the SCO's internal dynamics and its members' foreign policy, potentially causing divisions in alliances.

- Security Threats: incidents such as attacks on Chinese nationals in Pakistan pose security challenges that require coordinated responses, testing the organization's ability to manage internal security effectively.

#### 4. Significance of SCO:

Key Roles and Impacts revealed in recent summit

Two Significant Aspects

“On world unity for a just Peace, Harmony & Development.”

“One earth, One Family, One future.”



## Key Areas of Significance

- Cultural Exchange
- Geopolitical Significance
- Economic Collaboration
- Security Cooperation

a. Security Cooperation: The SCO focuses on combating terrorism, extremism, and separatism in the region. Recent discussions emphasized the need for enhanced cooperation in intelligence sharing and joint military exercises to address emerging security threats, particularly concerning Afghanistan.

b. Economic Collaboration: The SCO fosters economic connectivity among member states through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative. The recent meeting addressed strategies for improving trade, investment, and infrastructure development, aiming to strengthen economic ties.



**c. Cultural Exchange:** The SCO promotes mutual understanding among its diverse member states. The recent meeting included discussions on expanding cultural programs.

**d. Geopolitical Significance:** The SCO serves as a counterbalance to Western influence in the region. The recent meeting highlighted the organization's role in promoting a multipolar world order.

**e. Addressing Global Challenges:** The recent meeting underscores the SCO's commitment to addressing global challenges such as climate change, health security, and economic recovery post-pandemic. Member states discussed collaborative efforts to tackle these issues, emphasizing the importance of solidarity and joint action.



## 5. Pakistan at the

Forefront :

Strategic Gains

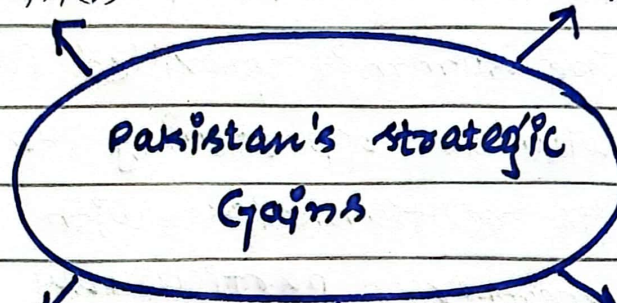
for Pakistan

from recent summ-

-it.

Economic  
Opportunities

Strengthening  
Regional Ties



Geopolitical  
positioning

Security  
Cooperation

Multilateral  
Cooperation

The SCO's 23rd Summit held  
in Islamabad on October 15, 2024,  
presents Pakistan with opportunity  
to project its positive image to  
the world.

a. Economic Opportunities: Recent

Summit presents an opportunity

to boost Pakistan's economy through



increased trade links, participation in infrastructure projects, and access to regional markets, particularly through CPEC. Various documents signed by Prime Ministers of both countries.

### b. Strengthening Regional Ties:

The summit provided Pakistan with an opportunity to reinforce its relationships with key SCO members, particularly China and Russia.

### c. Security Cooperation:

Enhanced cooperation with other SCO members can aid Pakistan in addressing internal security issues and border management under the regional Anti-terrorist structure (RATs).

### d. Geopolitical Positioning:

Pakistan's active involvement in the SCO can enhance its geopolitical significance, positioning



it as a crucial player in regional stability and development.

**e. multilateral cooperation:** By participating in the SCO summit, Pakistan reaffirmed its commitment to multilateralism in addressing global challenges, such as climate change, health, security, and economic recovery.

## 6. conclusion :-

It is stated that, the recent SCO summit has reaffirmed the organization's vital role in promoting regional stability and cooperation, despite facing challenges. For Pakistan, the summit served as a platform to strengthen diplomatic ties, enhance security collaboration, and explore economic opportunities.