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Title: The re-emergence of Pakistan as a global player

Outline

1- Introduction

Thesis Statement: In 2025, Pakistan has re-emerged as a global player mainly due to its diplomacy. The utilization of the firepower, geo-strategic location and political rhetoric has enabled Pakistan to re-achieve its lost global significance. Pakistan can surely retain this "golden age of diplomacy" by countering internal and external threats.

2- The "May Conflict" acted as a catalyst in the re-emergence of Pakistan

3- Pakistan as a defense ally in the era of multi-polarity

a) Anti-terrorism cooperation with the USA is making inroads towards regional security

b) Pak-China defense production is

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captivating the global attention
c) Emergence of Pakistan as a
saviour of the Middle Eastern
countries

d) Turkey's naval support is strengthening
Pakistan's position in Arabian
sea

4- Revival of Pakistan's economy through economic diplomacy

a) Trade deal with the USA and
the search for new possibilities

b) The second phase of CPEC is
revitalizing relationship with China

c) Foreign direct investment by
Middle Eastern countries as a
solution of balance of payment
crisis

d) Economic cooperation with CARs as
a stepping stone towards new
economic ties

e) Loan rollovers are helping
Pakistan in securing economic
stability

5- Political diplomacy and an end to India's regional hegemony

- a) Emergence of Pakistan as a countering force against India despite economic fragility
- b) Pakistan - Bangladesh friendship and insecure eastern border for India
- c) Diplomatic dilemma ended to balance USA and Iran
- d) Political dialogue with Russia and inclusion in regional organizations

6- Challenges for Pakistan in consolidating its position as a global player

- a) Indo - Afghan alliance and their patronage of cross-border terrorism
- b) Over-reliance on the USA for regional security may prove fatal
- c) Internal political fiasco might sabotage the diplomatic efforts

7- Conclusion

Pakistan is located on the strategic crossroads of South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East. AS, "Father of the nation" - Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah once said: **"Pakistan is the pivot of the world, as we are placed on the frontier on which the future of the world revolves"**. The unique strategic location of Pakistan has always captivated the attention of the global powers. When Pakistan came into being in the year 1947, the cold war was going on. Pakistan had to choose between the communist and the democratic blocs. In **1954**, Pakistan chose the democratic bloc of USA, ^{the former} when it got admitted in **South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO)**. The next year marked with the inclusion of Pakistan in **Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)**; another western alliance. In the year **1979**, when Soviets were pursuing their aspirations to reach the "hot waters" Pakistan declared Jihad to save

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Afghanistan from USSR. It was due to the American support that Pakistan pushed back Soviets which later resulted in the disintegration of USSR in **1991**. In the aftermath of the **9/11**, USA launched "**Operation Enduring Freedom**" in Afghanistan which against terrorism. Once again, Pakistan emerged as an ally of the superpower. However, USA never felt contented of the Pakistan's sacrifices and it resulted in a breakdown of the "diplomatic romance" between the global superpower and Pakistan. After the expatriation of NATO forces from the war-torn Afghanistan in 2021; the significance of Pakistan as a global player reduced unprecedentedly. However, ~~the year 2025~~ has proved in 2025; Pakistan has re-emerged as a global player mainly due to its diplomacy. The utilization of the firepower, geostrategic location and political rhetoric has enabled Pakistan to achieve its lost global significance. Pakistan can surely retain this "golden

age of diplomacy" by countering internal and external threats.

The "**May Conflict**" with India proved as a catalyst in ~~claiming~~ Pakistan's ^{claiming} its lost position as a global player. The major superpowers used to rate India better than that of Pakistan. USA was employing "**India first policy**" to counter the influence of rising China. However, the political, militaristic and diplomatic errors of India provided unexpected leverage to Pakistan. India remained at the losing edge on not only the militaristic front but ~~also~~ on the diplomatic front also. In the aftermath of the tactical supremacy of Pakistan's armed forces; the multi-party delegation of Pakistan presented the political narrative of Pakistan before the world, ^{in a better way.}

Thus, the allignment of the multi-institutional efforts paved the way for the "golden age" of country's diplomacy.

¶ Undoubtedly, Pakistan is re-emerging as a global player as it has

become a part of defense alliance of several countries. In an era, where world is continuously moving towards multi-polarity; Pakistan is neutral in its defense engagements.

First of all, Pakistan's anti-terrorism cooperation with ^{the} USA is making inroads towards regional security.

India has portrayed Pakistan as a launching pad of global terrorism.

It has invested a lot of capital and manpower to paint Pakistan as a Tehadist state. For instance, in

2019-20 ; EU disinfo Lab revealed the 750+ fake media outlets involved in spreading anti-Pakistan disinformation.

The cooperation of Pakistan in arresting **Muhammad Shareef Ullah** - the alleged mastermind behind Kabul Airport suicide bombing ^{of 2021}, shows serious commitment

of Pakistan in counter-terrorism department. The public gratitude of American President Donald Trump has strengthened Pakistan's resolve in strengthening regional security.

Secondly, Pakistan has emerged

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as a potential arms exporter as country is continued to joint produce defense equipment with China. The transition from one of the biggest importers of the military hardware into a reliable exporter; is captivating the global attention. All the major powers of the world including the USA, Russia and China earn a lot of capital by exporting defense equipment. By exporting jointly produced fighter jets, tanks, and missiles; Pakistan is stepping into the world of military industrial complex. The recent defense deal with **Libya worth \$4.6 billion** holds a great significance for Pakistan. The similar arms export deals were signed with Azerbaijan, Nigeria, and Iraq etc. So, it is safe to say that Pakistan is consolidating its position as a global defense dealer.

Thirdly, Pakistan has appeared as a savior of Middle Eastern countries. Especially, in the aftermath of ~~it~~ Israel's aggression against strong American

ally i.e; Qatar. The only Islamic country with nuclear weapons has succeeded in portraying itself as a reliable defense ally as gulf nations grew wary of ^{the} US defense guarantees.

The Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement between Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan is a landmark defense pact. Its primary clause that "aggression against either country will be considered an aggression against the both", resembles to the collective defense approach of the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**. Moreover, Pakistan's active role in solving the decades old Gaza dispute can be analyzed through **UN Conference on Palestine**. The conference was attended by eight muslim countries including Pakistan. Thus, proving Pakistan as a leader of muslim world.

Furthermore, Pakistan is actively cooperating with Turkey to enhance its naval strength. Turkey, being the only muslim country ⁱⁿ of the NATO, excels in the field of naval

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superemacy. From the last few years, the relationship between Turkey and Pakistan ^{was} were not in ideal situation. But through diplomacy and enhanced engagements, Turkey is helping Pakistan to boost its Naval strength. The **MILGEM**-class ~~coast~~ corvette ships delivered by Turkey, are helping Pakistan in boosting its presence in Arabian sea. **PNS Babar** and **PNS Khaiber** have been delivered as of December 2025. While **PNS Badar** is expected to be delivered till 2026 and **PNS Tariq** will be integrated into the Pakistan's naval fleet till 2027. ~~With~~ So, strengthened position of Pakistan in "hot waters" will create deterrence and resultantly peace will be secured in Arabian sea.

Apart from the defense alliances, statescraft demands reliable economy in order to act as a global player. Pakistan's economy is in doldrums due to ^{the} harsh conditions imposed by the international lending organizations i.e. **International Monetary**

Fund. The country cannot sustain with the balance of payment crisis and ~~vicious~~ vicious debt trap. However, Pakistan is searching for new pathways ^{for economic stability} through its global influence. The trade deal with the United States of America is expected to add stability in Pakistan's economic system. The economic partnership with America in the fields of oil extraction, export of rare earth minerals, and crypto currency might help Pakistan's economy to rise like a phoenix from the ashes. Additionally, Pakistan's economic diplomacy helped the country to not fall a victim to American tariff war. Pakistan is one of the few countries with lower tariffs i.e. 19% tariffs; in comparison of 50% tariffs imposed on India by the USA. So, Pakistan has a chance to gain ^{economic} advantages from the tariff war as a blessing in disguise.

Secondly, the "Gawadar factor" is rejuvenating the ideal relations with China. The **China Pakistan Economic**

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Corridor has entered the its second phase officially in September, 2025. China is not only an all weather friend for Pakistan but an emerging global power also. The cooperation with China in the fields of transport, infrastructure, information technology, areas of livelihood, agriculture, and space technology has finally started reaping fruits. The completion of **Gawadar International Airport, M-5 and M-14 motorways alongwith Khunjerab to Rawalpindi Fibre Optic Project, etc.** is not only developing under-developed areas but country's progress towards digitalization is accelerating also. Therefore, **Gawadar significantly and CPEC** collectively, is captivating global attention as world is perceiving Pakistan as an emergent global player.

In addition to this, the foreign direct investment from various countries is helping Pakistan to address balance of payment crisis effectively. The import based unsustainable economic model of Pakistan is seeking international

support through direct investment. The **Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC)** - a civil and military joint effort to attract foreign investment; has succeeded in attracting foreign investors. KSA's investment in **Reko Dik Project** of worth \$1 billion, establishment of **Saudi Aramco Refinery** of worth \$10 billion and KSA and UAE's joint investment in **Green Pakistan Initiative** in Cholistan; are some instances of foreign investment in Pakistan. Had it not been the economic diplomacy of Pakistan, the country would not ^{have} been able to attract ^{the} foreign investment.

Furthermore, economic cooperation with Central Asian Republic States (CARs) might prove as a stepping stone towards latest economic ties. Pakistan has always underscored the significance of better economic relations with Central Asia. However, ^{with} the proper utilization of ^{the} country's geo-strategic location, Pakistan can improve connectivity and people to people contacts with CARs. **The Uzbekistan - Afghanistan -**

Pakistan railway project can revitalize regional connectivity and joint logistics sector. Moreover, the cooperation with CARS in the field of clean energy might help Pakistan in addressing its expensive energy needs. The **CASA-1000 Power Project** will bring 1300 MW of clean hydropower from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Pakistan. In other words, economic ties with the Central Asia might provide financial edge to Pakistan, a condition to improve its global image.

More importantly, a debt oriented economy cannot sustain for a long time with a sword of paying back loans with the additional interest. Pakistan, being the a victim of debt trap has succeeded in ~~to~~ persuading the lender countries in ~~to~~ rolling back their loans. Although, a temporary relief but it will help Pakistan to channelize all its energies to increase its foreign reserves without worrying for paying additional interest. The friendly countries of China,

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates have rolled back loans for Pakistan. It helped Pakistan to remain compliant with the IMF's **Extended Fund Facility (EFF)**. Thus, the loan rollovers proved as hidden favour for Pakistan by friendly countries mainly due to its economic diplomacy.

In an era of globalization and interdependence, countries cannot counter hegemonic tendencies without effective political diplomacy. For the last few decades, India has proved to be a regional hegemon to bully its neighbouring countries. The United States of America used India as a counter balance force against ~~The~~ China. However, in the aftermath of the "May Conflict"; the world started perceiving Pakistan as a countering force against India. In global politics only ~~its~~ interests prevail. As India achieved the mark of fourth biggest economy, it is in the interest of both USA and China to let India drain

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its capital and manpower in its defense against Pakistan. Pakistan being financially ~~economic~~ fragile, still got the support of China and ^{the} USA. The political diplomacy of Pakistan is the main factor behind its ^{re-emergence} ~~regrowth~~ as a global player.

Another trouble for India is the unprecedented growing ties between Bangladesh and Pakistan. Bangladesh has acted as a proxy of India since its inception. But after the fall of Hareena Wajid's regime in August, 2024; the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan have constantly improved. As Bangladesh is the eastern neighbour of India; its ~~the~~ growing friendship with Pakistan is surely troubling ~~Pakistan~~ India. The security assurance to Bangladesh's regime ^{by Pakistan} made India insecure about the **Chicken's neck** - seven sister states of India near Bangladeshi territory. Moreover, the assassination of **Sharif Usman Haadi** - the founder of **Inqilab Moncho** party in Bangladesh has deteriorated the already

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worse relations between India and Bangladesh. Thus, political diplomacy of Pakistan has made the possibility of a new bloc in South Asia, ~~over~~ a writing on the wall.

Furthermore, Pakistan is playing freely in the context of Saudi Arabia and Iran. The diplomatic acumen of Pakistan has negated the compulsion of choosing one out of ^{the} two brotherly countries. For the first time in history, Iran did not feel insecure of the defense pact between KSA and Pakistan. In **2015**, when Pakistan joined **The Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition**, Iran showed its concerns about Pakistan being too friendly with KSA. But owing to the moderate diplomacy of Pakistan, Iran not only welcomed ^{the} **Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA)** but wished to make ^{more} such alliances between other brotherly nations also. Thus, ^{the} growing friendship among KSA, Iran and Pakistan is not only fostering the Islamic brotherhood but ^{endangering} the

trade ties of India with KSA and Iran.

Last but not the least, the ~~re-emergence~~ re-emergence of Pakistan as a global player is fostering the goodwill gesture between Russia and Pakistan.

Russia has always been a good ally of India. But power respects power, so ^{does} Russia. ~~does~~ Despite having ^{Pakistan's} the good relations with ^{the} USA, Russia is interested in developing better working relationship with Pakistan. The

rehabilitation of **Pakistan Steel Mill** in Karachi proved as a stepping-stone towards the beginning of new era. As, Russia is a part of a major regional organization **BRICS**, better relationship with Russia might pave a way for Pakistan's inclusion in BRICS. Pakistan can surely take advantage of a visionary framework of BRICS including de-dollarization and trade. In short, better working relationship with Russia will help Pakistan in countering the

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influence of India - Russian friendship.

Although, Pakistan is re-emerging as a global player in the spheres of defense, economy, and global politics. Nevertheless, there are several challenges for Pakistan in consolidating its position in the global arena. The emerging Indo-Afghan alliance may prove fatal to the efforts of Pakistan. The patronage of counter-border terrorism by Afghan regime is a threat to Pakistan's internal security. According to the **report of UNSC**, presented in 2025; the **Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan** is a biggest security threat in the region. The insurgency in Balochistan is fueled by India. **The Balochistan Liberation Army** carried out multiple attacks against Punjabi citizens and law enforcement agencies. The joint patronage of terrorism by India and Afghanistan is fueling the flames of extremism and separatism. So, it is mandatory to get rid of cross-border terrorism to retain a spot as a global player.

Furthermore, overreliance on America for regional security may prove fatal. For the decades, America has served New Delhi as a counter-balancing power against China. The **Civil Nuclear Deal** between India and America directly hurts Pakistan's security interests. The USA has proven to be an unreliable long-term partner for Pakistan. It is an evident fact that America sanctioned four Pakistani entities in **December, 2024** which was detrimental to Pakistan's aspirations to build Inter-Continental Ballistic missiles. India purchased about **\$20 Billion** nuclear equipment from the USA. Thus, Pakistan should perceive USA as a short-term ally as over-reliance on the USA may be a tactical error of Pakistan.

Lastly, Pakistan must settle down the internal political fiasco as it may sabotage the diplomatic efforts. ^{All} The stakeholders must understand the difference between state and government. The political persecution and

politics of vendetta must be put to an end. The favourable economic circumstances must be given to the investors. For instance, in 1986, **Vietnam** was suffering from ^{internal} political fiasco with **700%** inflation. But the country proved to be a tech-hub through institutional stability and human capital investment. To retain its position as a global player, Pakistan must follow the path of economic stability and political dialogue.

To sum up, Pakistan has undoubtedly re-emerged as a global player. The defense collaboration, economic, and political dialogue and diplomacy paved the way for Pakistan ~~for~~ in re-establishing its significance. In the past few years, Pakistan remained a victim of geo-strategic location. The hostile eastern neighbour, unstable north-western front and skeptic western neighbours did not add

contribute towards the growth of Pakistan but acted otherwise. The sincere efforts of different stakeholders of the state alongwith miscalculation of India proved beneficial in the re-emergence of Pakistan as a global player. However, this spot is difficult to maintain as global interests are continued to ~~be~~ changed. Instead of over-relying on the USA, Pakistan must maintain friendship with its all weather friend China. However, Pakistan must refrain to be a part of any external conflict. The internal instability must be addressed to avoid diplomatic efforts to going for naught.
