

Discuss the Pakistan's historic role in ECO and under the framework of regional integration; What are the future prospects of ECO for Pakistan?

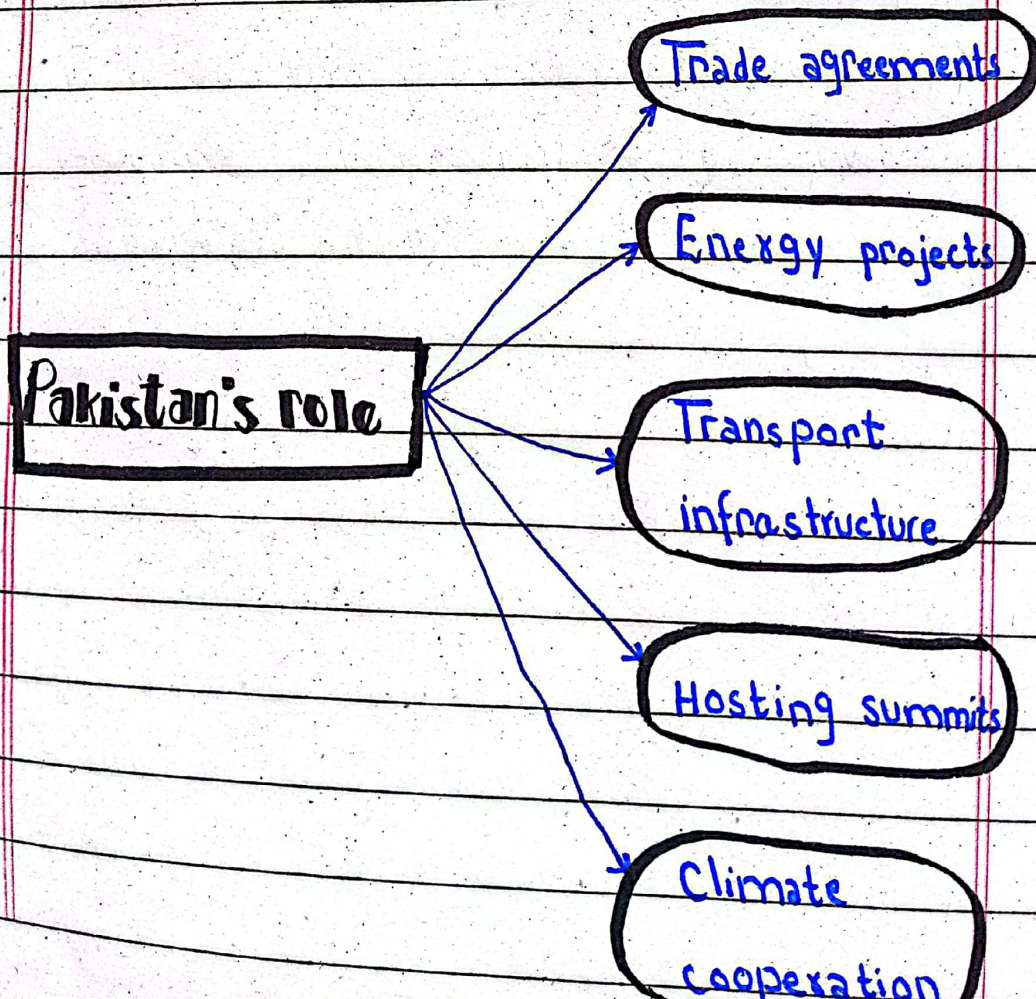
### Introduction:

Pakistan was the founding member of Economic cooperation organisation along with Iran and Turkey in 1985. This intergovernmental organisation was established to promote free trade, economic growth and development, investment, climate cooperation and cultural exchanges among the member states. Pakistan has played key role in building infrastructure, energy projects, free trade agreements, coping with the challenges caused by climate change. Under the framework of ECO, Pakistan can establish diplomatic relation via free trade agreements.

can fulfill the demands of energy sector, improving tourism sector and diversifying its exports and imports among the member states.

## Pakistan's historic role in Eco:

As a founding member of ECO, Pakistan has always played a key role in the following areas:



# Trade agreements for economic growth and development:

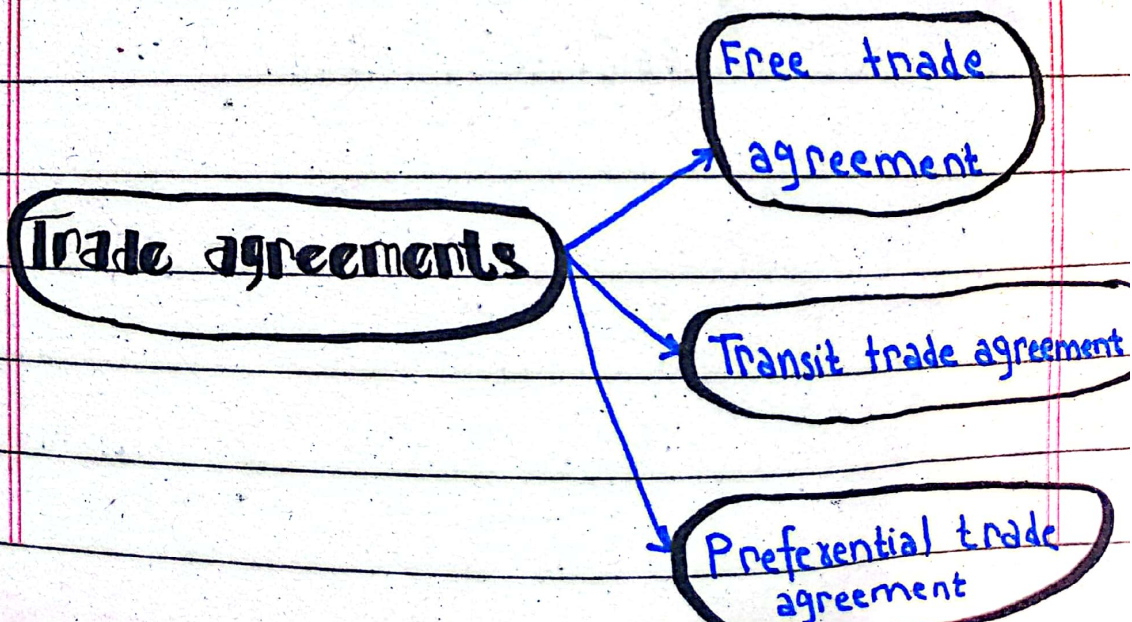
Pakistan has made several trade agreements with the member state for the economic growth and development.

Including:

**Preferential trade agreement** with Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan for the promotion of trade and cooperation.

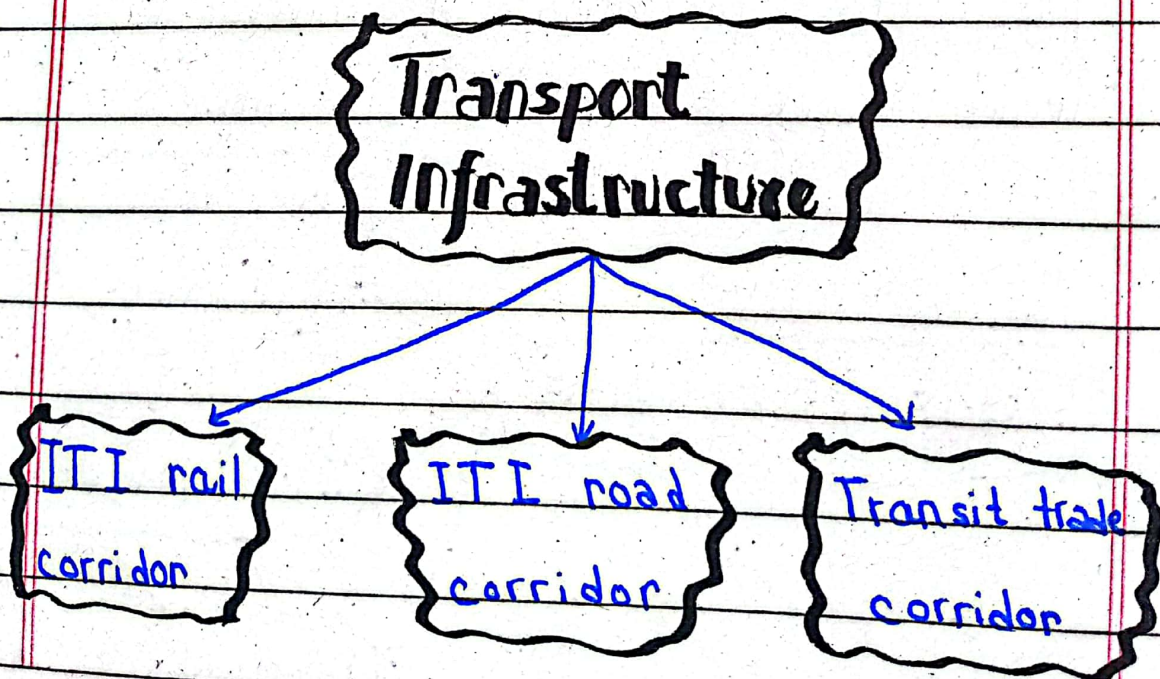
**Transit trade agreement** with the Afghanistan for transit of goods between the two countries.

**Free trade agreement** with Turkey for the promotion of bilateral trade and economic growth.



# Transport Infrastructure for Regional Connectivity:

Pakistan has played a major role in building transport infrastructure that include Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul rail corridor, Islamabad-Tehran-Istanbul road corridor, Transit trade corridor that connects Pakistan, Afghanistan and central Asia. The basic purpose was to ensure regional connectivity, reduce transportation cost and increase trade among the member states.



## Hosting Summits of ECO:

Pakistan has hosted three summits of economic cooperation organization including 1<sup>st</sup> summit in 1992, 5<sup>th</sup> summit in 2002, and 13<sup>th</sup> summit in 2017 in Islamabad. The basis

purpose of these summits was promoting trade, regional connectivity, investment, strengthening cultural ties and energy cooperation among the member states.

## Role in energy projects:

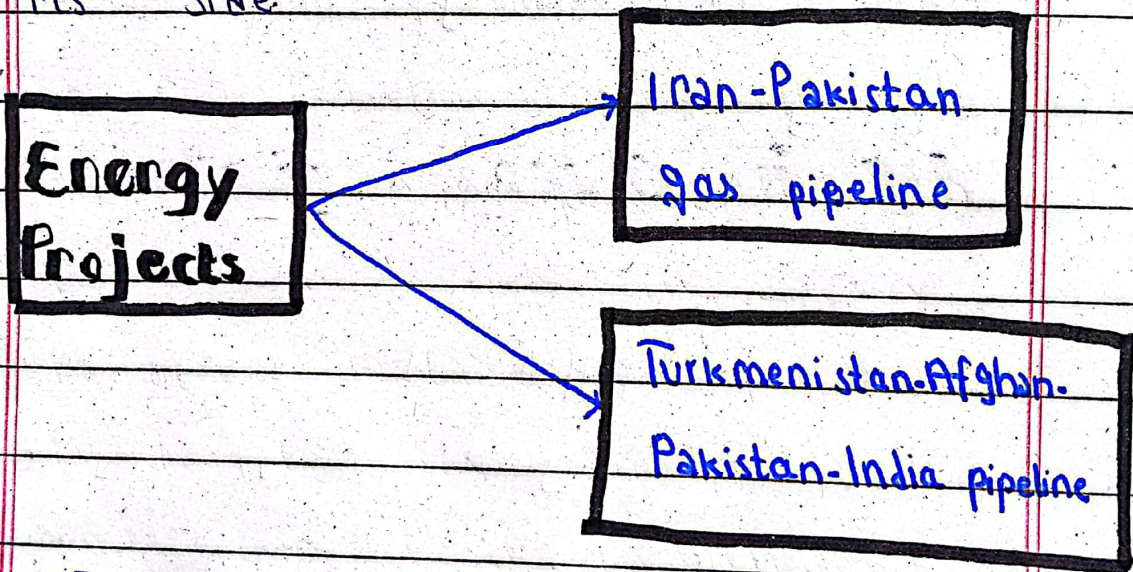
Pakistan, in order to fulfill its energy sector needs, has signed energy projects with member states. **Turkmenistan-**

**Afghanistan-Pakistan-India** energy project was signed to provide 33 billion cubic meter natural gas of Turkmenistan to the other three members with a share

of 42% to Pakistan and India  
and 16% to Afghanistan.

Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline also known  
as peace pipeline was initiated in  
1995. This project was aimed to import  
(33) 756 million cubic meters of  
natural gas of Iran to Pakistan.

Iran has built its section but  
Pakistan due to the threat of  
sanctions from US has not built  
its side.



## Climate change cooperation:

During the  
26<sup>th</sup> ECO council of minister  
held at Tashkent, Pakistan's  
delegation called for "Loss and

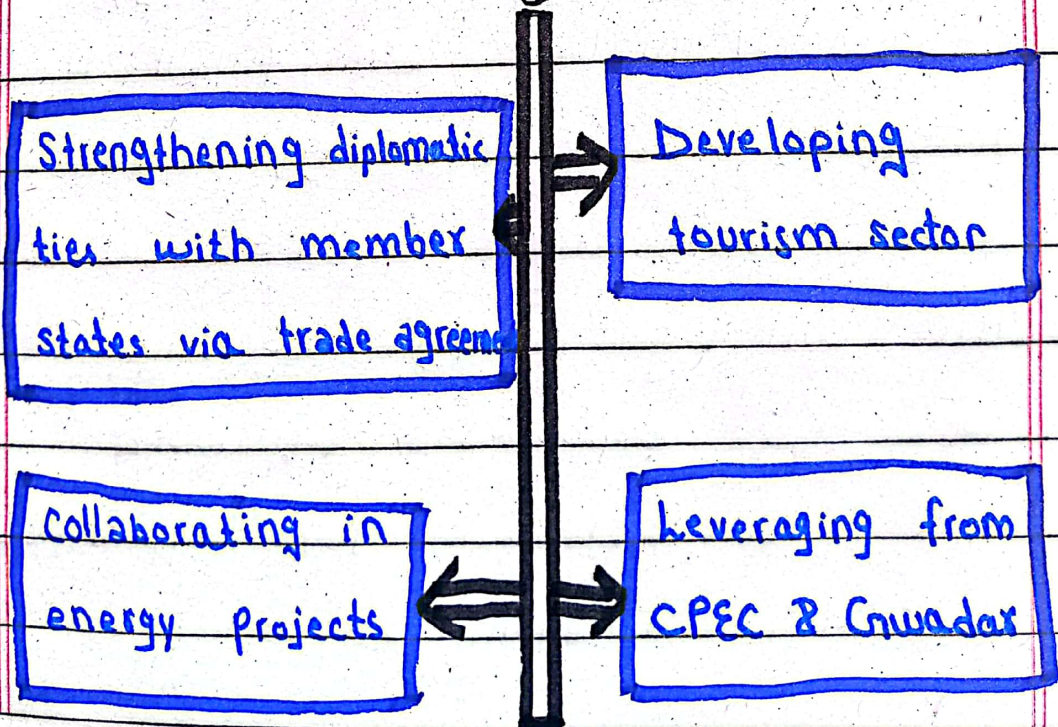
damage Fund' at UN climate change conference.

Previously, Pakistan acceded to Istanbul declaration on climate change and green economy in the context of sustainable development (in the) adopted in the 5<sup>th</sup> ECO Ministerial meeting on Environment in 2014.

## Future prospects for Pakistan:

Under the framework of ECO future prospects for Pakistan are:

### Future prospects



## Strengthening diplomatic ties:

Using the platform of ECO, Pakistan can negotiate bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with the member states. These agreements will reduce tariffs, foster trade and investment and contribute to the economic growth of a country.

## Collaborating in energy projects

under the framework of ECO, Pakistan can collaborate in different energy projects. As ECO region is rich in energy resources, Pakistan can fulfill the needs to its energy sector and can boost industrialization. This will not only contribute to the export-led growth but also create job opportunities for the individuals.



## Developing tourism sector:

Pakistan can develop its tourism sector using cultural heritage, natural landscape and historical sites. This will generate revenue for the country. It will also create new jobs, cross-culture exchanges and social cohesion.

## Leveraging from CPEC and Gwadar port:

CPEC can be used as a vital link between the ECO region and World trade network. This will not benefit Pakistan but also to the ECO region as it will provide diverse market for (A<sup>n</sup>) export and import sources. The strategic location of Gwadar will provide access to the Arabian sea for central

Asian countries reducing their dependencies on other states.

## Conclusion:

Hence, from the above discussion it is proved that Pakistan has played a vital role in the development and promotion of goals of ECO. Also there lies various potentials prospects under the framework of Economic Cooperation Organization.