

SCO

(b)

Q. Explore the significance of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) for Pakistan.

Introduction

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), created in 2001, now comprises 8 permanent members with a demographic weight of over 40% of global population. Pakistan acceded as full member in 2017, elevating its continental diplomacy from South Asia into Eurasia. Andrew small in "The China Pakistan Axis" argues that Eurasian multilateralism provides Pakistan "non-Atlantic strategic options", and SCO exactly fits this strategic need in a multipolar era.

∴ SCO as a Platform
for multipolar diversification ∴

Pakistan's foreign policy suffered
from mono-alignment with the
West during Cold War, War
on terror and IMF cycles.

SCO helps Pakistan diversify
alignments in a world no

longer US-centered. Zbigniew
Brezinski in 'The Grand
Chessboard' called Eurasia "the
decisive super continent", therefore

the SCO gives Pakistan
a seat inside the new
geopolitical centre of gravity. This
diversification is existential for
a state battling structural
external vulnerability.

∴ Regional Non-Western securitization ∴

SCO security doctrine is

counter - terrorism, separatism,
extremism (the three evils).

Pakistan benefits because these
categories match its internal
threat map. The RATS

mechanism in Tashkent provides
real intelligence sharing and
is one of the few

multilateral bodies where
Pakistan and China co-operate
in operational CT domains.

Maleeha Lodhi in "Pakistan
Beyond the Crisis State"
calls this ~~non~~ non-Western
security networking "past - 9/11
emancipation".

1. Economic corridors and Connectivity

Pakistan's continental geography
is a strategic point.

By synchronising CPEC
with SCO, Pakistan can
anchor itself as a land-
bridge from Arabian Sea →
Central Asia - Kazakhstan and
Uzbekistan want warm water exit,
while China needs shortest
oceanic vector. Pakistan thus
becomes indispensably connected.

This is not speculative
theory - Karachi Port
already processes SCO-linked
cargo flows.

2. Energy security logic

Pakistan is an energy
deficit state with peak

at least partially - Tim Marshall
 thus neutralises Indian obstruction
 anchor institutional balance Pakistan
 consensus because China and Russia
 cannot unilaterally sabotage
 India is present but
 provides a table where
 India's veto culture - SCO
 SAARC became hostage to

Institutional de-india-isation

summer gaps exceeding 6,000
 (Nu) historically SCO is Central
 Asian members - Turkmenistan,
 Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan - possess
 massive surplus hydro carbons - TAPL,
 CASA - 1000 and Pakistan - Uzbekistan
 gas proposals are all
 geopolitically covered by SCO
 umbrella - This is strategic
 oxygen: without energy security
 Pakistan cannot industrialize.

in "Prisoners of Geography" he highlights how geography constrains power politics; SCO allows Pakistan to weaponise Eurasian geography against South-Asian suffocation.

Islamabad's Eurasian diplomatic imagination

Pakistan historically looks West into Middle East. SCO forces Pakistan to look North into Turkic belt. This expands cognitive map of Pakistani elite and embeds Pakistan into Asian continental diplomacy rather than Western security architecture. This psychological shift is extremely important because strategy is downstream of mental maps.

Threat Mapping

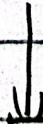
Identify terrorist networks,
financing routes &
safe havens



RATS Data Pool
Regional Anti-terrorism
Structure
Shared Intelligence
database



Coordinated CT Operations
Joint cross-border
actions &
simultaneous crackdowns



Internal Spill-over
Reduction
lowers terrorist infiltration
and domestic
attack frequency

Western
sanction regimes
SCO
financial
global
dialogue
and
the
push
for
local
currency
settlement, gives

α Counter - Sanctions architecture β

being
civilization
studies
are
already
higher
education
and
Islamic
commitments
in
culture,
tourism,
breathing
space.
Soft
power
creates
diplomatic
which
is
not
Washington -
an
alternative
epistemic
environment
present
the
counter-narrative
in
platforms
allow
Pakistan
to

Western
through
media
covers
Pakistan
terrorism
frames.
SCO

Soft Power and

Narrative
correction

Pakistan an embryonic shield
against unilateral coercive measures.
De-dollarisation is still experimental,
yet for a state like
Pakistan, even partial insulation
is a national security multiplier.

= Strategic Seaward access =

Gwadar is not merely a
port; it is an oceanic
exit for Eurasia. SCO envisions
a north-south vertical corridor
that covers into Pakistan's
deep waters. This transforms
Pakistan from a security consumer
into a connectivity producer —
a role previously denied
by geography mis-utilisation.

Middle-East Centricity
Traditional focus on
Arab-Islamic
diplomacy



Eurasian Re-orientation
Pivot to SCO, Central
Asia and China-
Russia Partnerships



New Alignments
Multi-vector foreign
policy and diversified
partnerships



Strategic Autonomy
Reduced dependency
on west and
independent policy
making

Stability dividend for Afghanistan

Peace in Afghanistan is existential for Pakistan's west flank. SCO is the only multilateral body where Afghanistan is treated as a regional security problem — not a NATO problem. Therefore SCO is the natural forum for post-US Stabilisation. If Afghanistan stabilises, Pakistan stabilises.

Conclusion

SCO is not symbolic for Pakistan; it is structural. It gives Pakistan multipolar breathing space, post-western security frameworks, energy corridors, narrative platforms, de-India-isation institutional balance, and continental identity.

In a divided world,
SCO is Pakistan's strategic
lifeboat. It is the first
major multilateral architecture
where Pakistan is relevant
by geography, indispensable by
connectivity and credible
by partnership.

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