

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
Brezewski 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

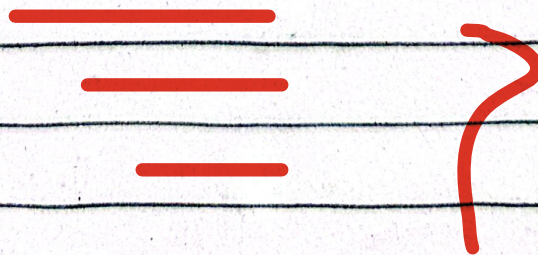
counter - terrorism, separatism,
extremism (the three evils).

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-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

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 covered by SCO
 geographically. This is strategic
 oxygen: without energy security
 Pakistan cannot industrialize.

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

Institutional de-India-isation

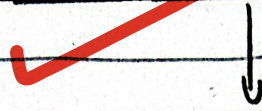
in "Prisoners of Geography" he
highlights how geography constrains
power politics; SCO allows
Pakistan to weaponise Eurasian
geography against South-Asian suffocation.

Islamabad's Eurasian
diplomatic imagination

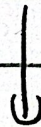
Pakistan historically looks West
into Middle East. SCO forces
Pakistan to look North into
Turkic belt. This expands
cognitive map of Pakistani
elite and embeds Pakistan
into Asian continental diplomacy
rather than Western security
architecture. This psychological
shift is extremely important
because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

Threat Mapping

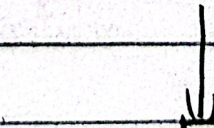
Identify terrorist networks,
financing routes &
safe havens



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

Narrative correction

Soft Power

Western media covers Pakistan through terrorism frames. SCO

platforms present the alternative epistemic environment in which is not created by Washington - diplomatic power

breathing space. This creates Soft power

commitments in culture, tourism, higher education and Islamic studies are already being proposed.

Counter - Sanctions architecture

Western sanction regimes weaponize financial push for local dialogue, currency settlement, gives

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 =

Guadar 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.

add and highlight references/examples against these arguments.....

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 divident 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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