

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE - II CURRENT AFFAIRS

### PART - II

QNo 2. Pak-Afghan relations continue to remain Tensed even after mediation by China. What do you think are major factors and how it could be improved?

### MAJOR FACTORS CAUSING THE TENSION:

#### 1. THE UNRESOLVED DURAND LINE

##### DISPUTE:

The foundational tension comes from the Afghanistan's non-recognition of the Durand Line as a permanent and international border, which is of 2640 km.

The Durand Line was drawn in 1893 that divides the Pashtun ethnic population on the Pakistani side fueling the Afghan claims for Pashtun territory. This dispute opens the sovereignty issues and as a result leads

to physical border clashes - that happens frequently, particularly when Pakistan attempts to fence the border to manage movement.

## 2. CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM

### AND ACCUSATIONS:

This is the most acute contemporary issue. Pakistan accuses the Afghan Taliban regime of failing to control or support the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which uses Afghan soil as a safe haven to launch deadly attacks in Pakistan. The Afghan Taliban denies these allegations and, in turn, accuses Pakistan of violating its airspace and sovereignty through retaliatory airstrikes.

## 3. DEEP-SEATED POLITICAL MISTRUST

### AND PROXY WARS:

It is almost decades now that each nation is attempting to influence the other's internal politics, and it has created strategic mistrust. Both countries have



historically engaged in proxy warfare, with Pakistan supporting various Afghan factions to secure "strategic depth" and Afghanistan historically aligning with regional rivals like India to counter-balance Pakistani pressure.

#### 4. THE COMPLEX REFUGEE SITUATION:

Pakistan  
host several million Afghan refugees. The issue becomes a sensitive pressure point during bilateral crises. Pakistan's recent use of mass deportation of undocumented Afghans has been widely criticized and has heightened animosity and anti-Pakistan sentiment within Afghanistan.

#### 5. GEO-POLITICAL AND REGIONAL POWER DYNAMICS:

India's significant presence and development work in Afghanistan are viewed with suspicion by Pakistan, while Afghanistan occasionally leverages support from Iran or Russia to mitigate Pakistani influence. This external interference complicates a purely bilateral resolution.



⇒ HOW RELATIONS COULD BE IMPROVED

## 1. SUSTAIN DIPLOMATIC DIALOGUE

High level and continuous diplomatic engagement is non-negotiable. Neutral International mediators like Qatar, UAE or UN envoy could help facilitate structured dialogue to de-escalate the crises and provide a neutral platform for addressing core grievances.

## 2. FORMATION OF JOINT COUNTER-TERRORISM MECHANISM:

A formal, transparent and verifiable intelligence sharing mechanism is essential. This will require both sides to agree on a clear definition of the terrorist group and demonstrate tangible action against them building necessary trust on security matters between both countries.



### 3. ENHANCING ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE

Focusing on the vast potential of the trading can create mutual economic stakes in peace and stability. Integrating Afghanistan into regional economic frameworks, such as the China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), offers powerful initiatives over the conflict.

### 4. PRAGMATIC BORDER MANAGEMENT

A formal resolution of the Durand Line might take time but the immediate improvements in practical, humane and secure border management protocols can reduce friction shifting the problem of the border to managed frontier would be a significant step forward.

### 5. SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL STABILITY AND RECOGNITION

Pakistan should encourage the Afghan government towards greater political inclusivity and adherence to international norms regarding human rights. A more internationally recognized and stable Afghan regime would provide a more reliable state-to-



The green house gases like  $CO_2$  and  $CH_4$ . If US withdraws then it will significantly reduce the overall global effort to cut the emissions, and the goal of Paris Agreement of limiting warming to  $1.5^\circ C$  will be much harder to achieve.

## 2. LEADERLESS WORLD.

The US loses its special seat at the table of the Paris Agreement's governing body, taking its ability away to shape the rules and market mechanisms for future global climate action. Other nations, notably China and European Union are stepping in to fill the vacuum, potentially setting standards that don't align with US interests and ideas if it chooses to rejoin later.

## 3. REDUCED CLIMATE FINANCE:

The withdrawal from the agreement terminates US obligations to provide financial support to developing nations through mechanisms like Green Climate Fund. This shifts a greater financial burden onto other developed countries and leaves the nations with less

Capacity to adapt to climate impacts,  
worsening global climate inequality.

#### 4. RISK OF DOMINO EFFECT

While no other country has done withdrawal from agreement following 2025 announcement, some observers fear that lack of commitment from a major economy could encourage other nations to reduce or delay their own climate pledges, citing unfair burden sharing.

#### 5. DOMESTIC-POLICY REVERSALS:

The US federal government is actively working to reverse existing climate policies and legislation, which could increase US emission trajectories in the near term.



# MITIGATING FACTORS AND CONTINUING EFFORTS

## 1. SUB-NATIONAL AND NON-STATE ACTION:

A significant counter movement exists within the US. Coalitions like the U-S Climate Alliance, as well as thousands of cities, business and universities, remain committed to meeting Paris Agreement goals despite federal inactions.

## 1. US REMAINS IN UNFCCC:

US remains a party to overarching UN Framework Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC. This means US representatives can still participate in annual climate negotiations (COPs), observe proceedings and potentially influence discussions, without voting rights in Paris Agreement's formal decisions.

## INTERNATIONAL RESILIENCE:

The Paris Agreement was designed to withstand political shifts. The global community has signaled a strong resolve to continue action, with most of other nations strengthening their



pledges over time. The EU and China has reaffirmed their commitment to climate leadership.

#### 4. GLOBAL MOMENTUM AND MARKET FORCES

The clean energy transition is driven by powerful global market forces and technological innovations that are largely indep of specific political actions. The global clean energy market is expected to reach over \$2 trillion by 2035 and many countries view investment in green technology as essential for future competitiveness.

Concluding, the US withdrawal creates a substantial void in leadership and financial capacity, making the global path to climate stability more difficult and placing a greater burden on other nations. However, the future of climate action will be more multipolar approach, where EU, China, substantial US actors and private sector play increasingly pivotal roles in driving the clean energy transition forward, demonstrating that global efforts are resilient but significantly challenged by absence of full US federal commitment.

Q6 How do you see chances of the end of Ukrainian war when the demands of Russia and NATO are conflicting and piles apart. Elaborate.

Ans The chances of war in Ukraine ending soon are very low because the core demands of Russia and NATO are completely opposed, neither side is currently willing to back down on their main goals, making a diplomatic solution that is difficult to find as of late 2021.

## RUSSIA'S DEMANDS:

Russia's demands mainly aim to remove Ukraine from the Western influence and to secure its territorial gains.

1. Ukraine Must Not Join NATO:

If Ukraine joins NATO, then it will be direct security threat for Russia and hence demands its permanent neutrality.

2. Ukraine Must Accept New Borders:

Russia insists that Ukraine must legally recognize the territories it has seized as Russian Territory.



### 3. "Demilitarization" and "Denazification"

These are substitutes for forcing political changes in Kyiv to create Russia-aligned government and hence limiting the size of the Ukraine's military.

## NATO's DEMANDS:

NATO and Ukraine reject Russia's demand entirely, insisting on Ukrainians' rights and to sovereignty and self-defence.

#### 1. FULL RUSSIAN WITHDRAWAL:

Ukraine demands that all Russian Forces leave internationally recognized Ukraine territory.

#### 2. UKRAINE HAS RIGHT TO CHOOSE ITS FUTURE:

Ukraine insists on its sovereign right to seek NATO membership and alignment with west.

#### 3. JUSTICE & LASTING PEACE:

Peace must be "Just and lasting", one that respects

In essence, the war will like continue until one or both sides face unbearable costs that force them to reconsider their demands. Until there is complete incompatibility of their goals means a peaceful end is not on immediate horizon.

Q8. Pakistan, Saudi-Arabia have signed historic defense pact. Critically evaluate the causes and implications of the deal.

**ANSWER:**

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed a landmark, in Sept 2025, Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA) formalizing their decades old relationships into binding alliance where an attack on any one will be considered an attack on both.

This historical deal has major causes related to changing regional dynamics and significant implications for the Middle East and South Asia.



# CAUSES OF THE DEFENSE PACT:

## 1. DECLINING US SECURITY GUARANTEE:

Saudi Arabia and other states have received reduced commitment from the US to their security especially after Washington DC muted response to an Israeli strike on "Qatar" in Sept 2019 and earlier attacks on Saudi Oil facilities. "Riyadh" thought to diversify its defense partners beyond the traditional US umbrella.

## 2. REGIONAL INSTABILITY AND THREATS

Escalating conflicts, Israeli's military actions in the middle East and concerns about the Iran's growing influence, prompted Saudi Arabia to seek a credible security partner to enhance its discouragement posture.

## 3. Pakistan's Economic & Strategic Needs:

Pakistan, facing economic fragility, sought unhindered financial aid, energy support and investments from SA. The pact also elevated Pakistan's diplomatic profile and strategic weight in Islamic World.

In summary, Pak-Saudi defense pact is strategic re-alignment driven by mutual security concerns and a changing global order. It significantly enhances the deterrence capabilities of both nations but introduces new complexities and risks, particularly regarding nuclear increase. regional stability.



state partner for Pakistan.

**Q5.** Trump once again pulled out the Paris Climate Agreement. Critically evaluate the future efforts against climate change in the absence of the world leader.

**Ans:** The US, under President Trump, again initiated a withdrawal from Paris Climate Agreement on January 20, 2025 and it will become official in 2026. This action significantly complicates the global efforts against the climate change but does not stop them entirely.

The absence of the US federal government, traditionally a key "world leader" in global governance impacts climate efforts in several critical ways.

## NEGATIVE IMPACTS:

### 1. WEAKEND COLLECTIVE AMBITION:

The US is the world's second largest emitter of

international law, not a capitulation to Russia

## WHY WAR IS UNLIKELY TO END SOON.

The vast gap between the demands means that war is currently in "stalemate" phase, with little immediate prospect for a resolution.

### 1. NO COMMON GROUND:

There is currently no acceptable middle ground, Russia views the war as 'existential struggle' and Ukraine views the war as a fight for its existence as indep nation.

### 2. NO MILITARY COLLAPSE (YET):

Neither side has faced enough military and economic pressure to force them to change their core demands, Russia believes it is winning war, while Western support helps Ukraine to defend.

### 3. PEACE TALKS ARE STALLED:

Recent peace talk efforts have made a little to no progress bcz Russia refuses to make concessions on key issues like territory.

### 4. HIGH TOLERANCE FOR WAR:

Russia has shown a very high tolerance for wars cost and still continues to commit vast resources to the conflict.



#### 4. Shared Religious and Historical Ties:

The agreement is built upon a long history of military cooperation, intelligence sharing and shared Islamic values, making formal alliance a natural progression of this relationship.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEAL:

#### 1. A De Facto NUCLEAR UMBRELLA:

This implication is potential for Saudi Arabia to be placed under Pak's nuclear umbrella. Pak officials indicated that their nuclear capabilities could be made available under the defense pact, creating a powerful deterrent against nuclear-armed rivals like Israel and raising global Arm control concerns.

#### 2. Reshaping Regional Power Balance:

The pact creates a strong Sunni-led security axis, altering the balance of power in Middle East and SA. It signals a shift towards a more multipolar security environment and challenges the existing US security architecture.