

Question 1

INTRODUCTION

SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) was established in 2001, with the addition of Uzbekistan into the already existing 5 countries (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). In June 2017 two of the rivals of the South Asia, Pakistan and India joined it. With the addition of Iran in 2023 and Belarus in 2024.

SCO is governed by Heads of State Council and meet every year at alternating locations. This year the host of the conference was Pakistan, it was held on 15 & 16th October, 2024 in Islamabad. The theme of this year was to work for sustainable peace and prosperity. Focusing on the key agendas, regional security, internal security and counter terrorism, fostering the network, Trade, investments, climate change issues etc.

KEY TAKEAWAYS OF THE CONFERENCE FOR PAKISTAN

1- Economic Opportunities :

The conference highlighted the regional trade and connectivity. Giving a opportunity to Pakistan to work for it-like China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, Pakistan has a chance to work with other members of the SCO, as Pakistan has a great geographic location, because other countries are landlocked and for the trade and economic prosperity Pakistan is the best route.

2- Enhanced Regional Diplomacy

Pakistan becoming a host, gave the country a chance to connect with the members, and it being the successful created a major change in its image being a capable and willing partner. It was attended by both the Rivals China and Russia despite having a

The India's external affairs minister who had positive remarks for the country. Proving the country's ability to facilitate such conferences to discuss the critical issues like security, economic integration etc.

3- Counter terrorism and security cooperation

One of the major agenda of the SCO is the terrorism and security issues. The host country was able to play a huge part in this, because Pakistan is one of the most affected country by terrorism. For a decade Pakistan fought the terrorism in the form of missions like Zab e Azam. Also, suffered the repercussions in the form of the most deadliest attack on schools in the world in the form of Army Public Deshawar massacre.

This conference allowed the country to identify the effects and strategies that worked in favor of the country, furthermore collaborative measures to deal with the stand security threats.

4- Climate Change Sideeffects

Although Pakistan has a very low part in the global climate change. But it is ^{only} the most affected countries of climate change, Upper Punjab being under danger due to very low air

quality, dropping to hazardous. Causing Respiratory issues in the region during the winters mainly, as a result shutting down the cities being one of the options to counter it. Pakistan as a host had a chance to put forward this important issue, also to work and collaborate with the members to overcome and tackle this issue.

Challenges

1- Implementation Issues

One of the major issue of the ~~implementations~~ of the initiatives discussed at the conference is the implementation. It is because of the weak governance, and ongoing current situation, political instability faced by the country. Every other day there are protests, sit-ins being observed in country costing the country not only that the new situation issue raised on the Peshawar incidents, make the government to lose control of the situation that can impact the international ties and countries

2- Economic Constraints

Pakistan's ongoing financial instability, caused due to high debts, fiscal deficits etc poses a challenge in the opportunities arose through the conference-limit resources. Causes restrictions in the large investments. With that corruption cases, reports on CPEC causes the mistrust, and disrupt the foreign finances.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1- Stabilize the economy for long term gains

Implementation of well developed reforms to overcome the economic instability is a necessity for the country now. This includes improve tax collection, reducing public debt creating opportunities for domestic and foreign investments.

2- Improve Relations with India

SCO gave a good opportunity to the old rivals to work to decrease the tension between neighbouring countries - Pakistan must work for the confidence building, through reviving the bilateral trade between the countries. This platform gave a chance for constructive dialogue that will foster its relation.

3- Collaborations on Counterterrorism and Security

Active participation in the SCO's counterterrorism framework, particularly the Regional Anti-terrorist Structure is essential for the country. Pakistan may share the strategies, coordination and border security with the SCO members to tackle the issue. This in result will improve the country's image as responsible and committed partner.

Conclusion

By implementation of the measures

and recommendation, Pakistan can address its internal challenges, strengthen its position within the SCO - Pakistan can transform the outcomes of the the conference in country's long term gain - The balanced approach, economic reforms and regional cooperation will ensure the productive role in SCO.