

Pakistan Affairs

DATE: 9th Jan, 2025

Question-1

How Pakistan's foreign policy navigate the complex balance between economic growth, security concerns and regional influence?

Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Pakistan's foreign policy seeks to promote, protect and advance Pakistan's national interest in the external domain. **Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah** in a broadcast talk to the people of the USA in **February 1948**, outlined the following goals of the foreign policy of Pakistan.

Our foreign policy is one of the friendliness and goodwill towards all the nations of the

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nations of the world. We do not cherish aggressive designs against any country or nation. We believe in the principle of honesty and fair play in national and international dealings and are prepared to make our utmost contribution to the peace and prosperity among the nations of the world.

The foreign policy of Pakistan is primarily directed to the pursuit of national goals of seeking peace and stability through international cooperation. Pakistan's foreign policy operates within a challenging framework where it must balance economic growth, security concerns, and regional influence. Here's how it navigates through these complexities.

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Economic Growth: Strategic Alliances And Economic Diplomacy

Pakistan's foreign policy emphasize on the economic stability and growth by fostering relationships with other nations and making economic alliances. Such as

i- China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

CPEC, a flagship project of the China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is central to Pakistan's economic strategy. It involves investment in infrastructure, energy and connectivity to drive growth and address energy shortage.

ii - Engagement with International Finance Institutions

Pakistan frequently seeks financial assistance from the international financial institutions such as **IMF**, **World Bank** and other institutions to stabilize economy and implement reforms.

iii - Trade Diversification :

Efforts are made to expand the trade ties beyond international partners like the **U-S** and **China** to include the **European Union**, **GCC**, and **ASEAN** countries.

iv - Remittances And Diaspora Engagement

By fostering relations with the Gulf countries and regions where Pakistani expatriates work.

Pakistan secures valuable remittance inflows.

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Security Concerns : Counterterrorism And Military Diplomacy

To cope with security concerns, Pakistan's foreign policy has adopted following strategies:

i- Counterterrorism Collaboration

Pakistan collaborates with the global partners including the US and China, in counterterrorism efforts to address domestic and regional threats from militant groups.

ii- Border Security:

The long and porous borders with Afghanistan poses a significant security challenge. Pakistan is engaged in fence construction and bilateral talks to

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manage cross border threats ,
especially with Taliban
government.

iii- Nuclear Deterrence

Maintaining a nuclear deterrence
is a cornerstone of Pakistan's
security policy, especially with
the adversarial relationship
with India.

iv- Military Alliances

Pakistan has cultivated strong
defense ties with China and
Gulf states by joint military
exercises and receiving advance
defense technologies.

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Regional Influence: Strategic Maneuvering

Pakistan can gain regional influence by the following strategical approaches.

i- Afghanistan Policy

Pakistan aims to maintain a stable and friendly government in Afghanistan to minimize security threats and enhance trade routes to Central Asia.

ii- Pakistan - India Rivalry

Relations with India remain tense, primarily due to the dispute of the Kashmir and cross border terrorism allegations.

Pakistan has presented its stance on Kashmir Issue on international forums for several

times while seeking ^{to} the counter-balance of Indian influence in South Asia.

iv - Central Asia And Connectivity

Pakistan seeks to enhance its positioning as a trade ^{hub} and energy projector, such as the TAPI (Turkemanistan - Afghanistan - Pakistan - India) pipeline.

iv - OIC And Islamic World

Pakistan is actively participating in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to strengthen its standing in the Muslim world, often lobbying for support on the issues like Kashmir.

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Balancing Competition Priorities

→ Economic - Security Tradeoffs

Investments in security e.g. military modernization, sometimes strain resources needed for economic development. Pakistan seeks external financing to mitigate these trade-offs.

→ Non-Alienating policy

While Pakistan has ties bonds with China, but it follows the 'Non-Alienating' policy which means to remain neutral and not to alien with any strong power bloc. Similarly, with China, Pakistan prioritize its non-alienating policy and don't go against Western allies.

→ Engaging Multilateral Forums

Pakistan uses platforms like the UN & SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) to project its regional influence and addressing security and economic concerns.

Conclusion:

Pakistan's foreign policy reflects a pragmatic approach to navigating its challenges. While economic growth drives its need for trade and investment, security concerns and regional dynamics heavily influence its priorities.

By leveraging strategic partnership, maintaining a robust defense posture and engaging with regional & international forums, Pakistan seeks to strike a delicate balance between these competing imperatives.