

Pak-China and Central Asia Strategic Partnership: An Analysis

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Abstract

China is Pakistan's strategic partner and an all-weather friend. A large number of Chinese companies are working in Pakistan, which support different development projects. China also has strong diplomatic ties with the neighbouring Central Asian states. They share their cooperation through different forums. Pakistan and Central Asian states also enjoy trade and cultural relations. Pakistan has provided all three ports—Karachi Port, Port Qasim and Gwadar Port to Central Asian countries for trade. Pakistan has also signed a number of agreements with them. Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan gas pipeline is an important project in this regard. Pakistan and China's relations with these republics is emerging as a natural bloc in the progress of the entire area. Pakistan and Central Asia are members of the OIC and China has always maintained good relations with all these Islamic states. The strategic communication and trade linkages of this triangle are expected to enhance inter-regional economic and political activity.

Pak-China relations in historical perspective

Pakistan was the first country in Asia that recognized Peoples Republic of China on 4 January 1950, and on that occasion expressed the hope that the two countries would develop cordial and mutually advantageous relations.¹ The Government of Liaqat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, gave a strong support to the cause of Peoples Republic of China in the United Nations.² After Pakistan's participation in the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the prospects of activating relations with China were marred. The reasons that Pakistan put forward

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¹ Anwar Hussain Syed, *China and Pakistan Diplomacy of an Entente Cordiale* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p.54.

² Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan Political Roots and Development, 1947-1999*, (Karachi, Oxford University Press, 2003), p.204.

as a justification for its participation in the security pacts could not disguise the fact that treaty was an alignment against China. Pakistan took active part in the Bandung Conference in 1955 and supported the cause of Afro-Asian countries; this was not liked by its western allies. During this conference, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Muhammad Ali Bogra, explained to Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En Lai, that Pakistan's participation in the SEATO did not mean that Pakistan was against China or that it had any apprehensions of Chinese aggression. As a result China did not adopt a hostile attitude towards Pakistan.³ In October 1956, Suhrawardy, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, made a ten days visit to China and was warmly received by Mao Zedong and others. It was confirmed that both China and Pakistan had many points in common; the two countries had no conflict of interests, though they differed in some ways.⁴

The second phase of Pakistan's relations with China starts from 1960 when Pakistan started supporting the cause of China inside and outside the United Nations. While criticizing the American attitude toward China, Manzoor Qadir, the then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, plainly stated in a television interview in Washington that, as a matter of principles, 'what justification is there not to recognize China?'. In 1961, President Ayub Khan visited US, where he supported the idea of Chinese entry into the United Nations. It was the same year that Pakistan voted in the favour of seating China in the United Nations.⁵ On 12 October 1962, the representatives of Pakistan and China began talks in Peking on 28 December 1962, Pakistan and China announced 'an agreement in principle on the location and alignment of the boundary actually existing between the two countries.'⁶ The Chinese press warmly welcomed the announcement. The boundary agreement between the two laid down the foundation of friendly relations. During the 1965 Indo-Pak War, China fully supported Pakistan. Thereafter China strengthened Pakistan's defense by supplying weapons. The Chinese President Leo Shao Chi visited Pakistan in March 1966 and assured in categorical terms China's also full support in the event of aggression. After the war, China widened the scope of economic cooperation. The ordinance factory in East Pakistan and the multi-purpose industrial complex in Taxila were the

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ S.M. Burk, *Foreign Policy of Pakistan an Historical Analysis* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1990, p.215).

⁵ Safdar Mahmood, *op.cit.*, pp.205-6.

⁶ Latif Ahmad Sherwani, *Pakistan, China and America* (Karachi: Council for Pakistan Studies, 1980), pp.124-25.

result of Chinese cooperation. The Karakorum highway that links Gilgit with China was completed by 1971. Earlier President Yahya Khan had himself visited China in November 1970. China strongly supported Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.⁷ During the Indo-Pakistan War in 1971, China extended to Pakistan its full diplomatic support but also advised on seeking a political solution to the East Pakistan crisis. Meanwhile Chinese economic and military support to Pakistan also continued. China used her veto against the membership of Bangladesh in the United Nations. It was a clear proof of its friendship.⁸

Bilateralism had become a major aspect of the foreign policy of Pakistan in the sixties. Pakistan extended her relations with all the great powers on a bilateral basis. Pakistan developed its diplomatic relations both with the Soviet Union and China for restoring balance in the region.⁹ Consequently, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was the architect of Pakistan's pro-China policy, could not get a favorable reception in Washington.¹⁰

During Bhutto period, it was generally assumed that Pak-China friendship was the result of Bhutto's personal influence. After coming into power, President Zia removed this impression when he visited China in December 1977. In June 1978, the Chinese deputy Prime Minister visited Pakistan with a forty member delegation. In June 1978, the Chinese premier Zhao Ziang visited Pakistan. In 1984, the Chinese President visited Pakistan and supported Pakistan's stand on the Afghan crisis.¹¹

Both Pakistan and China strengthened their relations in the 1980s despite the fact that, during this period, China also improved its relations with India. Pakistan continued to support Chinese sovereignty over Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Tibet. Throughout the 1990s, US imposed sanctions on Pakistan. In this critical time, China provided military hardware procurements to Pakistan. There were irritations in Sino-US and Sino-Indian relations when China provided nuclear support, M-11 missiles and 500 ring magnets to Pakistan. But despite pressure from the

⁷ Shaikh Muhammad Rafiq, *Pakistan since 1947* (Lahore: Standard Book House, 2000), p.527.

⁸ Syed Salahuddin Ahmad, *Foreign Policy of Pakistan, a Critical Study* (Karachi: Comprehensive Book Service, 1998), p.68.

⁹ K. Arif, *China Pakistan Relations 1947-1980* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Limited, 1984), pp.170-71.

¹⁰ Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism, Allah the Army and America's War on Terror* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2005), p.43.

¹¹ Shaikh Muhammad Rafiq, *op.cit.*, p.529.

US China continued to provide full support and high technology to Pakistan to strengthen its defense sector.¹²

In May 1998, the balance of power in South Asia was disturbed when India conducted her nuclear tests. Chinese media reported that 'India's explosions have sabotaged the fragile trust built up with Beijing over the past decade.'¹³ After the Indian nuclear tests, relations between China and India badly suffered. Due to this tension, China's South Asia policy reinforced Pakistan's importance. Pakistan and China thoroughly discussed the situation in South Asia. China showed her sympathy support and understanding with Pakistan when Pakistan conducted nuclear tests and openly demonstrated its nuclear weapons capability. In June 1998, the Chinese government, however, guaranteed cooperation to the visiting US President Bill Clinton on the issue of nuclear proliferation. China maintained its neutral position during the Kargil issue in 1999 between Pakistan and India. It desired to normalize the tense situation and asked both countries to resolve the issue.¹⁴

Pakistan and Central Asia

Pakistan has maintained its political, social, cultural, economic and religious ties with the Central Asian states. Pakistan is in search for land routes to Central Asia, but that requires peace in Afghanistan. Pakistan also wants diplomatically friendly and supportive Afghanistan for trade, transportation and other profitable relations with the Central Asian Republics. Similarly, Central Asia and Afghanistan want the good will of Pakistan for transport facilities through highways to the seaports. Pakistan was the first country that recognized all six Muslim republics and sent its diplomatic representative in these countries. Pakistan's embassies are working in Alma Ata in Kazakhstan, Tashkent in Uzbekistan, Baku in Azerbaijan, Ashkhabad in Turkmenistan and Dushanbe in Tajikistan.¹⁵ The then Foreign Minister, Sardar Assef Ahmed Ali, visited these Central Asian States with a delegation in 1992. The delegation succeeded in signing six memorandums of understanding with these states. Immense scope for improvement in economic relations was then felt and the government was determined to make a real breakthrough in that regard. Specific commitments were made in some

¹² Fazlurehman, 'Pakistan Evolving Relations with China, Russia and Central Asia', see http://srch.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no16_1_ses/11_rahman.pdf.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Syed Salahuddin Ahmed, *op.cit.*, p.85.

areas.¹⁶ A direct air link was established between Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was established by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. When the five Central Asian states came into existence, these were admitted to ECO as full members. The entry of these states paved the way to enhanced cooperation among them in various fields. Frequent visits of political leaders and officials of Pakistan and the Central Asia have boosted the prospect of mutual cooperation. However, this process is greatly affected due to the Afghan war for many decades. In spite of its economic difficulties, Pakistan has provided full support to all these states. Pakistan is providing transit facilities to Afghanistan for many decades and the emerging relations of Pakistan with these states can be of immense help in economic field. It could greatly reduce the cost and time of the Central Asian States and significantly boost the economy of Pakistan as well. Pakistan supported these states to become members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Pakistan and all these states are enjoying cultural, social and political relations from 1992 till date in addition to strong religious connection.¹⁷

Due to insecurity in Afghanistan, a common market through ECO, the Pakistani vision, has not been fulfilled. However, Pakistan's general trade with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is about \$2 billion. Pakistan's trade with Central Asia is about \$26 million. Pakistan is trying to be a full member of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) with the expectation to promote free trade among the member countries. Currently Pakistan has an observer status in the SCO. Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are helping Pakistan to become a SCO full member. Uzbekistan's support is due to the desire to utilise port facilities for trading with the rest of the world. Tajikistan had some reservations based on alleged support of militants by Pakistan. However, the former President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, had regular meetings with the Chinese officials and media and tried to allay SCO

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Qutubuddin Aziz, presentation at International Conference on Central Asia, held at Karachi, 27-30 November 1993 in Riazul Islam and others (eds.), *Central Asia: History, Politics and Culture* (Karachi: Institute of Central and West Asian Studies, University of Karachi), 1999, pp.169-74. Also see Dr. Noorul Haq and Asma Shakir Khwaja (eds.), *Pakistan and Central Asian States (1992-2006)*, IPRI fact file, Islamabad, 2006.

member countries concerns about Pakistan. He was invited to the 6th SCO Summit that took place in Shanghai in 2006.¹⁸

China's influence in Central Asia

Geographically China and Central Asian Republics are neighbours. Central Asia has provided China a passage way for transportation and communication between China and Europe, China has provided Central Asia a safe and protected passage to the Pacific Ocean. For thousands of years China and Central Asia had enjoyed mutual prosperity through the 'Silk Road'. This image was restored after the disintegration of Soviet Union in the beginning of 1990s, when Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan emerged as independent states.¹⁹

Central Asia has a very strategic location. It is rich in natural resources especially energy resources, the neighbouring states are, therefore, struggling for pipeline routes. Their natural resources have attracted the big powers. Regional and global players are playing their games there; 'New Great Game' in Central Asia has already started. Earlier, scholars were of the view that the actual rivalry in Central Asia was between Russia and America, but now China is expanding its relations with the region through trade, energy deals, military agreements and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). China, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan reached an agreement regarding territorial disputes known as 'Shanghai Five' in 1992. These five countries formally established the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001 with the addition of Uzbekistan.²⁰ Thus the rising Chinese engagement in Central Asia is now an established fact.²¹

Beijing is trying to monitor the trafficking of drugs and arms in the Xinjiang-Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Kirghizstan area. This will be in the best interest of Central Asia which also wants to avoid destabilization in the region which has already engulfed the neighboring Middle East. Central Asia must use Chinese influence as means of

¹⁸ Sarwat Rauf, *Pakistan Observer*, 13 April 2006, <http://pakobserver.net/200604/13/Articles04.asptxt=Pakistan%20and%20central%20Asia>; also see, Dr. Noorul Haq and Asma Shakir Khwaja, *op.cit.*

¹⁹ Sun Zhuangzhi, *The Relationship between China and Central Asia*, see http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/coe21/publish/no16_1_ses/03_zhuangzhi.pdf

²⁰ Hak Yin Li and Zhengxu Wang, *Assessing China's Influence in Central Asia: A Dominant Regional Power?* (UK: University of Nottingham, 2009).

²¹ Gulshan Sachdeva, 'India's Attitude towards China's Growing Influence in Central Asia, China and Eurasia', *Forum Quarterly*, 4:3, 2006, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, p.23.

harmony into the Asia-Pacific region – the new economic and political center of the 21st century. Meanwhile, China and Central Asia are also up against religious extremism of the Ughur separatist in Xinjiang and political opposition in Central Asia.

Keeping in view the geographic situation, Chinese ports can be used by these countries. Moreover, the influence of these countries on Russia has opened a new dimension in Chinese-Russian relationship. China also sees Central Asia as an easy transit route for expediting trade with Iran, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan. Similarly, it will make the Central Asia's historical role on Silk Road stronger and strengthen its regional role, though achievement of geo-political and geo-economic objectives has remained unachievable in the past. China is struggling to make the Shanghai Cooperation Organization a free-trade zone which is profitable for Chinese goods. It will open new markets in Central Asia and Russia. The commercial domination of China will control Russian markets in the near future. It is even feared that the global geopolitical equilibrium of the region can possibly convert Central Asia into one of the economic 'provinces' of the Peoples' Republic of China.²²

Pakistan, China and Central Asia: areas of cooperation

Gwadar Port being built by Chinese technical and financial assistance is becoming a central factor of Pak-China relationship. Situated at the mouth of the Persian Gulf — the source of 40 per cent of the world's oil — Gwadar can not only help China to get oil and gas supplies from the Persian Gulf but to project its power in the Indian Ocean. Gwadar bears central importance for China as it is the largest consumer of oil after the United States. In this joint venture Silk Route will bring substantial advantages to Pakistan. According to an estimate, Pakistan will be getting \$60 billion revenues per annum due to transit trade in 20 years.²³ Financial and commercial cooperation between Pakistan and China has progressed significantly during the last 10 to 15 years. During 2000-2010, the volume of bilateral trade grew seven-fold. The two sides plan to increase their bilateral trade to \$10 billion within five years. Currently Chinese companies are working on 250 projects in Pakistan. Some of these are mega projects jointly undertaken by Pakistan and China, including the Thar Coal Project, the Bhasha Dam, the widening of

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Rashid Ahmad Khan, *Pakistan-China Strategic Partnership*, http://www.China.org.cn/opinion/2011-05/20/content_22605398.htm

Karakoram Highway, the Gwadar Deep Seaport and the Saindak Gold and Copper Project.²⁴

The development of Gwadar Port in Pakistan can also bring about new opportunities in Pakistan's relationship with the Central Asian countries who could utilize the port to promote their trade globally. Currently Afghanistan's 85 per cent exports are sent through Pakistan. Similarly, Pakistan fulfils 15 per cent of Afghanistan import needs. This strong bilateral trade will strengthen when there is peace in Afghanistan, which will also encourage greater Pakistani investments in Afghanistan.²⁵

Pakistan and China are establishing a number of different projects and China is the biggest investor for the development of nuclear and coal-based power plants and large dams. Joint power projects are also helping in developing technology and technical expertise between them. In this regard, Basha Dam project, the Thar Coal Project and the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant are golden opportunities for Chinese investors.²⁶

The above mentioned projects are a part of Pakistan's Vision 2030 Plan. It will provide generating 8,000 megawatts of power from nuclear plants. Pakistan and China have already signed a number of MOUs for different projects. Pakistan is also keen to take benefit from Chinese experience, however, due to internal issues, strong diplomatic and political relations with China were not fully reflected in Pakistan to boost its economy.²⁷

Membership of Pakistan, India and Iran into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the recent years provide a new channel to enhance strategic interactions in South Asia. Significantly, China always stresses India to play a constructive role in South Asia, in general, and to peacefully co-exist with Pakistan, in particular.²⁸ Economic relations with China have also served Pakistan's strategic interests. Most of Pakistan's imports from China consist of military

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Zahid Anwar, 'Development of Infrastructural Linkages between Pakistan and Central Asia', *South Asian Studies*, 26:1 (Jan-June 2011), pp.105-6.

²⁶ Ayesha Idrees, 'Pak-China Strategic Partnership', *Pakistan Observer*, <http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=34499>

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Zhang Li, *Sino-Pakistan Strategic Nexus: New Issues, Potentials and the Emerging Trend*, paper presented at a international seminar on, Pakistan-China Relations in Changing Regional and Global Scenario, Far East South East Asia Area Study Center, University of Jamshoro, 29 September 2005.

equipment and investment for military production which affirms the central geopolitical concerns of the two countries.²⁹

Currently, China is the second largest trading partner of Pakistan. According to Chinese statistics the trade between the two countries went up by 31 per cent in 2010, that is it reached \$3.3 billion. While it is expected that it will touch the figure of \$15 billion in 2015.³⁰ Now both China and Pakistan have focused on regional economic agreements that would address the issue of energy, transportation and trade in the area.³¹

After the incident of 9/11, to discuss tense regional situation a special representative of China arrived in Islamabad on 18 September 2001. He met with General Pervez Musharraf and other officials and discussed the situation. Pakistan's became a non-NATO ally in the war against terrorism and provided its airspace and base facilities. Chinese were apprehensive about these developments, but mutual visits of officials helped in removing them. Pakistan assured that under no circumstances will it compromise any Chinese strategic interests because of its partnership with the US.³² China also recognized Pakistan's sacrifices in the war against terror. One Chinese daily pointed out in this respect: 'Pakistan sincerity in the anti-terror crusade should not be questioned as the country has borne and continues to bear the brunt of international terrorism'.³³

After 9/11 Pakistan also improved its relations with the Central Asian states, but terrorists in Afghanistan when they were attacked by NATO forces, came to the tribal areas of Pakistan. This sometimes affected Pakistan's relations with Central Asia. Through military operations in those areas Pakistan has tried to stop cross-border terrorism. It has also suggested, several times, to fence and mine Pak-Afghan border, but the Afghan government has not supported this idea. Currently, Pakistan is enjoying good relations with all Central Asian states.³⁴ Pakistan, China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan have signed a number of trade and transit agreements since 2004. These transit

²⁹ Madhu Bhalla, 'Geopolitics of Economic Relations', Swaran Singh (ed.) *China-Pakistan Strategic Cooperation Indian Perspective* (New Delhi: Lordson Publishers, 2007), p.252.

³⁰ Mahmoodul Hasan Khan, 'Pakistan and China to Strengthen Economic and Trade Ties', *The News International*, Islamabad, 23 August 2010.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Abdus Sattar Ghazali, 'Osama Episode Reinvigorates China Pakistan Ties', *The Nation*, Islamabad, 31 May 2011.

³⁴ Fazlurahman, *op.cit.*

arrangements could also be extended to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as well. Former President Musharraf, in his address in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit, in 2006, stressed that Pakistan will help to strengthen the SCO framework, 'in geopolitical, geostrategic, and geo-economics terms. Further, Pakistan strategic position is most important to play a key role in all interests and it will help to promote the SCO charter. Pakistan is also connecting naturally the SCO states'.³⁵

Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India gas pipeline is an important project. Most of northern India and Pakistan are deficient in energy resources. This region perhaps has scantiest endowment of hydrocarbons of any important economic zone on earth. On the other hand, at the distance of few hundreds kilometers, the plains of Central Asia consisting of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and the northern regions of Afghanistan, there are rich natural resources and may hold as much as over 217 TCF (trillion cubic feet) of gas reserves. This estimation is more than the Saudi Arabia's reserves. Energy is the basic need for the economic growth of both the countries. In order to connect South Asian states to Central Asia, two options have been proposed: the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline and the Termez-Kabul-Peshawar-India (TKPI) pipeline.³⁶ Pakistan and China are upgrading the Karakoram Highway (KKH). They have decided to open four new road links through the Khunjerab Pass. In this way the total number of China-Pakistan roads links will be eight. Bus service is also proposed and it will promote people-to-people contacts among these states.³⁷

The Chinese leadership appreciated Musharraf government's policies on anti-terrorism and peaceful resolution of contentious issues with India. As there were some Chinese apprehensions about links between separatist forces in Xinjiang and the *jihadi* organizations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Chinese campaign against Muslim separatists in Xinjiang was supported by the President of Pakistan in his visit to China in December 2000. He said that the Chinese Muslims are very devoted to work and determined for the advancement of their country. He also assured Pakistan's full support to China to fight against East Turkestan terrorist forces. That was the first time that a Pakistani leader publicly supported Chinese policies to curb Muslim separatists in Xinjiang. Pakistan has also signed agreements to institutionalize anti-terrorism dialogue and share intelligence on terrorism. In this regard first

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Zahid Anwar, *op.cit.*, pp.108-9.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

China joint anti-terrorism military operation under the name of 'Friendship' was held in Xinjiang in 2004. The Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao visited Pakistan in 2005. On this occasion both the countries signed a treaty of friendship, cooperation and good neighborly relations. They also agreed on joint operation to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism. As a result of this agreement, Pakistan tried to remove the support of religious groups from Pakistan side to the Chinese Uighur Muslim separatists.

Pakistan and China defense collaboration has always been the most important element of their overall cooperative relations. The army always played an important role in the political decision-making of both countries; in this regard high-level visits have been made by the army to boost their bilateral relations. Recently, Pakistan and China have institutionalized a mechanism of defense and security consultation. Since March 2002, three rounds of consultations have taken place. China and Pakistan, in October 2003, conducted a joint maritime search-and-rescue exercise near Shanghai in order to enhance military-to-military cooperation. This happened for the first time that the Navy of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) conducted a joint exercise with a foreign country, followed by a second joint venture of the same type with Pakistan in November 2005. Both the countries have common interest in the security of the sea lines of communication, and both support a multilateral framework for guarding energy and trade sea-routes. Pakistan and China cooperation has increased greatly in the defense production sector. They have jointly developed JF-17 Thunder—a multi-role fighter aircraft. China also signed a deal with Pakistan to build four F-22P frigates for the Pakistan Navy and transfer the technology as well. They also cooperate with each other in some other ongoing defense projects subject to the satisfaction of both sides.

Besides global war against terrorism, Pakistan and China have unanimity of view on other global issues like Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Iranian nuclear program. Both countries wish to strengthen the authority of the United Nations and oppose unilateralism.³⁸ Former President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari and the former Prime Minister, Yousaf Raza Gilani, visited China several times. Last year, Chinese premier Wen Jiabao and Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang paid their visits to Pakistan.³⁹

³⁸ Abdus Sattar Ghazali, *op.cit.*, and *ibid.*

³⁹ Masood Khan, 'Pak-China Friendship: A Lush Tree', *Pakistan Pictorial*, July-August 2011, Islamabad, Pakistan Publication, p.39.

Conclusion

Pakistan, China and Central Asia enjoy close cultural, social and political relations. Pakistan's economic and strategic relations with China are important for regional peace. Although transfer of modern technology, defense, and energy cooperation is the need of the hour among these states, there are impediments like terrorism, insecurity, and lack of proper infrastructure. All the three regions states can broaden their socio-economic and political goals through mutual cooperation. China has been playing a major role in the development of Central Asia. It could help this landlocked region play its potential regional and global role in a dynamic way.