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# **PLACE AND ROLE OF PAKISTAN IN GLOBAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS**

*Published in:*

**EASTERN ANALYTICS  
Vol. 13, No 4 (2022)**

ВОСТОЧНАЯ АНАЛИТИКА  
Т. 13, № 4 (2022)

EASTERN ANALYTICS  
Vol. 13, No 4 (2022)



Kazakhstan



Tajikistan



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Turkmenistan



Azerbaijan



Original article. Politics studies

УДК 327 (549.1)

<https://doi.org/10.31696/2227-5568-2022-04-086-098>

## PLACE AND ROLE OF PAKISTAN IN GLOBAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

**Dr. Zainab Ahmed**

Golden Ring Economic Forum, Lahore, Pakistan,  
[zainabamalikpu@gmail.com](mailto:zainabamalikpu@gmail.com), [info@gref.org.pk](mailto:info@gref.org.pk)

**Engr. Hasnain Reza Mirza**

Golden Ring Economic Forum, Lahore, Pakistan,  
[info@gref.org.pk](mailto:info@gref.org.pk)

**Abstract.** The global dynamics are rapidly changing owing to compounded, augmented and complexed security issues, asymmetric conflicts, economic challenges overlapping issues of sovereignty and territorial integrities and socio-economic implications of these threats. At the core of this transitory phase lies the shift of power from the West to Asia. These realities have zoomed in the geoeconomics and the twenty first century is being drawn on this as the twentieth century belonged to the geopolitics. This fundamental transition is elevating the strategic significance of Pakistan, the "Zipper State", connecting the Eurasian Vision and a clipping state for Belt and Road Initiative. The primary factor of US to compete China and the former determining Russia a malign factor intensifies the bidding to have maximum influence in this region. India, has become a natural and potential choice of priority for the US. India's new found position in the Indo Pacific as the US Net Security Provider, it's foundational agreements with the US for huge logistic, intelligence and military systems cooperation renders it a valuable partner for the West to contain China and Russia. The emerging nexus of US-India-Israel in the Indian Ocean is clearly a bid to encircle China and Russia in which Pakistan elevates to be the front line or the first target, or if tapped and incentivized adequately, to be a defense. Russia's prudent Eurasian Vision and International North South Trade Corridor is a win-win project to engage Iran and India. Yet the former's natural inclination towards the the US and the latter's highly limited options due to Arab-Israel nexus in the Strait of Hormuz post Abraham Accords may pose a challenge to the practicality of these connectivity visions. The growing requirements of regional connectivity align China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey naturally for the mutual and regional security and prosperity. The most significant point in this regional connectivity is the Gwadar Port having huge potential of catering to regional trade, connectivity and aligning with other regional trade routes with much better security prospects. Russia, an important global actor and regional player, and Pakistan have the suitable prospects to leverage Pakistan's magnified role in global politics for practical gains, can jointly play a better counter game.

**Keywords:** Zipper State, Indo-Pacific, QUAD, AUKUS, Abraham Accord, Net Security Provider, BRI, CPEC

**For citation:** Zainab Ahmed, Hasnain Reza Mirza. Place and role of Pakistan in global and regional affairs. *Vostochnaâ analitika = Eastern Analytics*. 2022;13(4):86–98. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.31696/2227-5568-2022-04-086-098>.



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Научная статья. Политические науки

## МЕСТО И РОЛЬ ПАКИСТАНА В ГЛОБАЛЬНЫХ И РЕГИОНАЛЬНЫХ ДЕЛАХ

**Зайнаб Ахмед**

Экономический форум Золотого кольца, Лахор, Пакистан,  
zainabamalikpu@gmail.com, info@gref.org.pk

**Хаснаин Реза Мирза**

Экономический форум Золотого кольца, Лахор, Пакистан,  
info@gref.org.pk

**Аннотация.** Глобальная динамика быстро меняется из-за сложных проблем безопасности, асимметричных конфликтов, экономических вызовов, перекрывающих вопросы суверенитета и территориальной целостности, а также социально-экономических последствий этих угроз. В основе этой переходной фазы лежит смещение центров силы с Запада на Азию. Эти реалии усилились в геоэкономике, на которую опирается XXI век, так как XX век принадлежал геополитике. Этот фундаментальный переход повышает стратегическое значение Пакистана, как «Зиппер-государства», соединяющего Евразийское видение с инициативой «Пояса и пути». Основной фактор конкуренции США с Китаем, где первый рассматривает Россию в качестве пагубного фактора, усиливает стремление этих государств к максимальному влиянию в данном регионе. Новый статус Индии в Индо-Тихоокеанском регионе в качестве поставщика сетевой безопасности США, ее основополагающие соглашения с США о всеобъемлющем сотрудничестве в области логистики, разведки и военных систем делают ее ценным партнером для Запада в сдерживании Китая и России. Формирующаяся связь между США, Индией и Израилем в Индийском океане, очевидно, является попыткой окружить Китай и Россию, в которой Пакистан становится линией фронта или первой мишенью, а при надлежащем использовании и стимулировании – защитой. Дальновидный Евразийский подход России и Международный торговый коридор Север-Юг – это беспроигрышный проект для вовлечения в него Ирана и Индии. Тем не менее, естественная предрасположенность последней к США и крайне ограниченные возможности Тегерана из-за нормализации арабо-израильских отношений в Ормузском проливе после заключения соглашений Абрахама могут поставить под сомнение практическую реализацию этих концепций взаимосвязанности. Растущая потребность в региональной связанности естественным образом объединяют Китай, Россию, Иран, Пакистан и Турцию для обеспечения взаимной и региональной безопасности и процветания. Наиболее важным пунктом в этой региональной взаимосвязанности является порт Гвадар, обладающий огромным потенциалом обеспечения региональной торговли, связанности и сопряжения с другими региональными торговыми маршрутами с гораздо лучшими перспективами безопасности. Россия, как важный глобальный и региональный игрок, и Пакистан с его перспективами использования своей возросшей роли в глобальной политике для получения практических выгод могут сыграть совместную взаимовыгодную партию.

**Ключевые слова:** «Зиппер-государство», Индо-Тихоокеанский регион, ЧСДБ, АУКУС (трехсторонний оборонный альянс Австралии, Великобритании и США), соглашения Абрахама, поставщик сетевой безопасности, ИПП, КПЭК

**Для цитирования:** Зайнаб Ахмед, Хаснаин Реза Мирза. Место и роль Пакистана в глобальных и региональных делах. *Восточная аналитика*. 2022;13(4):86–98. <https://doi.org/10.31696/2227-5568-2022-04-086-098>



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## **Introduction**

The world is in the phase of extensive yet convoluted transition. The entire twentieth century revolved around geopolitics but the twenty first century is concentrated on the geo-economics. The shift from geopolitics to geo-economics has transformed the global political arena intrinsically. Furthermore, the gradual shift of power from the West to Asia is jolting the world at different levels. The transition in power paradigms and structure have elevated the position of various global and regional powers. During the last decade, where China has emerged as the world economic power, on one hand, whereas, the resurgence of Russia has also augmented its potential to implicate global politics and geo-economics multifold. In this transition, Pakistan happens to become strategically and geopolitically more significant than it ever was. According to the concept, as presented by Mr. Andrew Korybko, Pakistan is a "Zipper State". Pakistan holds an immensely significant geographical position for connecting Eurasian Union and South Asian Region<sup>1</sup>. This connectivity is vital for the Russian vision of regional cooperation and connectivity to South Asia and China's BRI. The shift of power cannot just be gauged from traditional power paradigm. Rather the nontraditional elements of power now exhibit more significance. Demography, economy, natural resources, cultures, ethnicities and regional tendencies in the wake of globalization matter most. The transition from uni polarity to multi-polarity and regionalism or bipolar multilateralism is the new reality. Territorial security, energy security and trade connectivity are the major convergences having the prospects to bring the regional countries closer and build more constructive bilateral and multilateral relationships.

Asymmetric challenges and conflicts are evolving rapidly. In particular, during the last few years, US-China competition has emerged as the major factor, shaping global strategic environment transforming the ongoing uni-polar order after the disintegration of Soviet Union. The challenges are much grave now as the world is bracing with the implications of Covid-19 pandemic. According to World Bank, a global economic slowdown may be in making and become more visible during 2023<sup>2</sup>.

## **Transforming Global and Regional Environment**

During the last decade the global trade and connectivity has been revolving around the Chinese vision of Belt and Road Initiative. The unprecedented vision of BRI amasses entire Eurasia in the net of connectivity and trade multi-

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<sup>1</sup> "Pakistan is the Zipper of Pan-Eurasian Integration", Andrew Korybko. URL: <https://crss.pk/pakistan-is-the-zipper-of-pan-eurasian-integration/>

<sup>2</sup> "Risk of Global Recession in 2023 Rises Amid Simultaneous Rate Hikes", September 15, 2022. The World Bank Press Release URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/09/15/risk-of-global-recession-in-2023-rises-amid-simultaneous-rate-hikes>

lateralism. However, the US strategy of containment of China is spread in entire Indo Pacific through military and economic partnerships and by instigating tensions in and around Taiwan, the Eastern Coast of China. The Strait of Taiwan has another strategic importance as it connects South China Sea and East China Sea, practically an important point to connect Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. Though Pacific Ocean is of primary interest to the US, as had been during the twentieth century, but the significance of Indian Ocean remained paramount even then. Looking at the foreign military presence picture in the area, there is NATO, CMF with its CTFs (Counter Terrorism Forces)-150, 151 and 152 covering all the way starting from Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and from Indian Ocean's Western coasts of India to Somalia and Red Sea. Then there are AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom and United States of America) and QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) Accords and lately the inclusion of Israeli factor through Arab-India-Israel-US nexus under Abraham Accords. India, though a very important state in Indian Ocean, has recently evolved huge and deep-rooted strategic interests with the US limiting its ability to vividly align with the regional requirements. India has also been given the status of US Net Security Provider in the Indo Pacific.

These US led partnerships in the Indo Pacific are critically important. The most significant is the QUAD; the alliance of Australia, India, Japan and the US. Since 2020 the rejuvenation of QUAD, in military cooperation primarily all QUAD members in the entire Indo Pacific region, encompasses the entire trade hub of the world setting a new theatre of competition in Asia. India had hosted last year military exercises of QUAD nations which basically was a declaration of militarization<sup>3</sup>. QUAD navies are conducting exercises this November the off the Japan coast in Pacific<sup>4</sup>. With the advent of twenty first century, the focus of global politics and in particular geo economic tendencies shifted from the Atlantic to the East. For decades the region was known as Asia Pacific but the term of Indo Pacific coincides with the rise of China and as soon as the US started considering it its primary challenge. The Indo Pacific is more like an imaginative map encompassing the entire region encircling China through the seas<sup>5</sup>. The great power competition between the US and China has triggered a power balancing in the region with all regional powers considering China to

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<sup>3</sup> "The QUAD Conducts Malabar Naval Exercise", *The Diplomat*, August 27, 2021. URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/08/the-quad-conducts-malabar-naval-exercise/>

<sup>4</sup> "QUAD navies to exercise off Japan in November in Pacific", November 2, 2022. URL: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/quad-navies-to-exercise-off-japan-in-pacific-in-november-101664253954430.html>

<sup>5</sup> "The Coming of QUAD and Balance of Power in Indo Pacific". Soumyodeep Web & Nathan Wilson, *Journal of Indo Pacific Affairs*, 2021. URL: <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Dec/12/2002907687/-1/-1/1/JIPA%20-%20DEB%20&%20WILSON.PDF> p 112, 111–122

be their primary threat<sup>6</sup>. The balance of power theory describes that the states' agenda to balance any competing power invokes internal balancing for power also to enhance their comparative power capabilities. This internal and external balancing of the regional and extra regional powers with intense interests in the region culminated in AUKUS with the most important implication of nuclearization of Australia in Indian Ocean<sup>7</sup>. These all developments coincide with the unprecedented project initiated by China; Belt and Road Initiative. The more this was embraced by the Eurasian states the more US's response intensified. In the National Security Strategy of 2017, there is a definite prioritization of China as the primary challenge for the US global interests. The strategy identifies that this is the competition between the free and repressive powers. The same strategy declares Russia as the malign factor to be contained<sup>8</sup>. The US declared the Indo Pacific Region as the single most 'consequential region for the American future'. The US has bilateral trade of USD2.3 trillion with ASEAN countries (Association of South East Asian Nations) and investment of USD1.3 billion in this region, which constitutes integral part of Indo Pacific<sup>9</sup>.

In the US National Security Strategy of 2022, the policy of competition with China continues. The global priority it has set for itself is primarily out-competing China and constraining Russia<sup>10</sup>.

The above Figure-1 clearly shows that the activities of QUAD are focused in this entire region that certainly encircles and contains China and along with-it Russia; both are now the main targets. The agreement of AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom and United States of America) is a bid to nuclearize Indo Pacific by arming Australia with nuclear submarines and carriers; a territorial and maritime stakeholder in the Indo Pacific. The In 2018, the Pacific Command was renamed as Indo Pacific Command which encompasses about half of the world<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> "The Coming of QUAD and Balance of Power in Indo Pacific". Soumyodeep Web & Nathan Wilson, Journal of Indo Pacific Affairs, 2021. URL: <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Dec/12/2002907687/-1/-1/1/JIPA%20-%20DEB%20&%20WILSON.PDF> p 113, 111–122

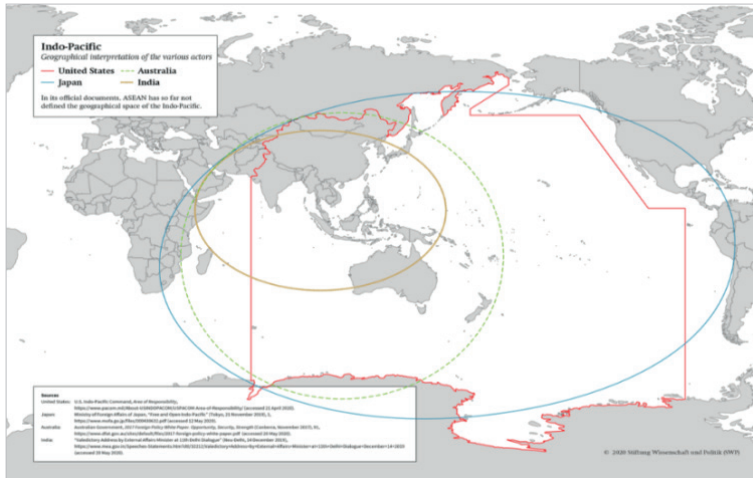
<sup>7</sup> "The Coming of QUAD and Balance of Power in Indo Pacific". Soumyodeep Web & Nathan Wilson, Journal of Indo Pacific Affairs, 2021. URL: <https://media.defense.gov/2021/Dec/12/2002907687/-1/-1/1/JIPA%20-%20DEB%20&%20WILSON.PDF> p 114, 111–122

<sup>8</sup> "National Security Strategy of the United States of America," The White House, Washington: 2017. URL: <https://www.hsdl.org/c/abstract/?docid=806478>

<sup>9</sup> "Indo Pacific Strategy Report: Preparedness, Partnerships and Promoting Networked Region," Department of Defense, 2019. URL: <https://www.state.gov/wpcontent/uploads/2019/11/Free-and-Open-Indo-Pacific-4Nov2019.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> The US National Security Strategy, 2022, The White House. URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Biden-Harris-Administrations-National-Security-Strategy-10.2022.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Cleo Pascal. "Indo Pacific Strategies, Perceptions and partnerships", March 23, 2021, Chatham House. URL: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/03/indo-pacific-strategies-perceptions-and-partnerships/02-us-and-indo-pacific>



**Figure 1.** Area of Operations for QUAD and AUKUS

Source: <https://bahria.edu.pk/polaris/the-us-free-and-open-indo-pacific-strategy-implications-for-china-2017-present/>

All of these developments in the region are not only clearly challenging the BRI and NSTC (North South Trade Corridor) connectivity initiatives, but also focus on encircling and containing China, Iran and Russia, entangling Pakistan into it. Any attempt to out compete China and constrain Russia necessarily involves the encircling architecture in Indo Pacific which directly implicates Pakistan. Pakistan assumes more importance in this scenario as it happens to be on the cusp of most important part of Indian Ocean having the potential to provide huge opportunity to Russia and China with an alternate shortest route and to exert influence in the Indian Ocean. If you see the map of Pakistan (Figure-2), on its Eastern borders it has its arch rival and enemy India, in the North the time-tested greatest friend, China, in the North West, extremely instable Afghanistan, in South West sanctions ridden Iran and in the South Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf opening into the Indian Ocean, the great game arena (Figure-2).

Therefore, Pakistan offers a great opportunity in the form of Gwadar port; an already established very important deep-sea port with huge trade potential and also Jiwani Port with a complete strategic positioning at the mouth of Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz on one hand, the Arabian Sea and far, on the other hand. This brewing strategic environment calls for a regional response in which Pakistan's natural alliance is, with China, Iran, Russia and Turkiye. The natural choice of the US to pose regional challenge to China is India. India's elevation to the status of Net Security Provider and the US's unfaltering support in enabling this alliance with operational capacity building agreements brings more pressure on to Pakistan. The foundational



agreements signed between the US and India enables the mutual exploitation of military hardware, bases, geo spatial data sharing and intelligence and reconnaissance sharing<sup>12</sup>.



**Figure 2.** Map of Pakistan

Another reality is the Russia-Ukraine war with huge regional and global implications. The strategic location of this war makes it a global conflict at the choke point of Eurasia. This conflict has three basic implications; affecting oil supplies in the global market, impacts of sanctions on Russia's gas supply to Europe and plausible global bifurcation over the response to conflict. As a consequence, to this war Russia has not only been able to establish its position in this region but also it stays firm on its position to not let the West and in particular, NATO, to expand. Russia reestablishes its influence on the trade routes of Black Sea also. This region has become the global flashpoint of military conflict and energy politics intricately wrapped. The immediate message it sent into the adjacent Middle East, in particular, and the world generally that Ukraine is paying a heavy price of believing in the US guarantees of security and support in conflict<sup>13</sup>. The agreement it signed to allow Ukrainian wheat supplies through the ports of Black Sea is practically under the watch and influence of

<sup>12</sup> Zainab Ahmed. "Great Power Rivalry in Indo Pacific: Implications for Pakistan", 2021, *Strategic Studies* Vol. 41 (4). URL: [https://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/4-SS\\_Zainab\\_Ahmed\\_No-4\\_2021.pdf](https://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/4-SS_Zainab_Ahmed_No-4_2021.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Medlir Mema. "A Regional Perspective on the Russia-Ukraine Conflict", Middle East Policy Council, July 3, 2022. URL: <https://mepc.org/commentary/regional-perspective-russia-ukraine-conflict>.

Russia. Any disturbance in this supply under the watch of Russia send global waves of uncertainty in food supplies<sup>14</sup>The US National Security Strategies since 2017 have been categorizing Russia as a 'malign factor' in global politics<sup>15</sup>. It is considered by the US to be the biggest support and major strategic partner of China. Russia-Ukraine conflict has also been designed at hitting the main point of BRI connectivity with Europe through Russia by affecting the Middle Corridor.

### ***Strategic Place of Pakistan and Evolving Role***

Amid all this situation of rising tensions and conflicts of various kinds and forms, the US-China competition and the US desire to suppress Russia in Europe, the multipolar and multilateral trends in the global trade and connectivity are under extreme pressure. Pakistan is strategically an extremely important country which is serving as a lynchpin in BRI connecting its land and sea routes. In this situation Pakistan's position even gets more important to connect and provide an important and safe alternate route to global and regional trade and in particular for the Central Asia, China, Iran and Russia through the strategic Gwadar Port. Pakistan faces immense pressure from the growing influence from the US, militarization and exceeding US support to India.

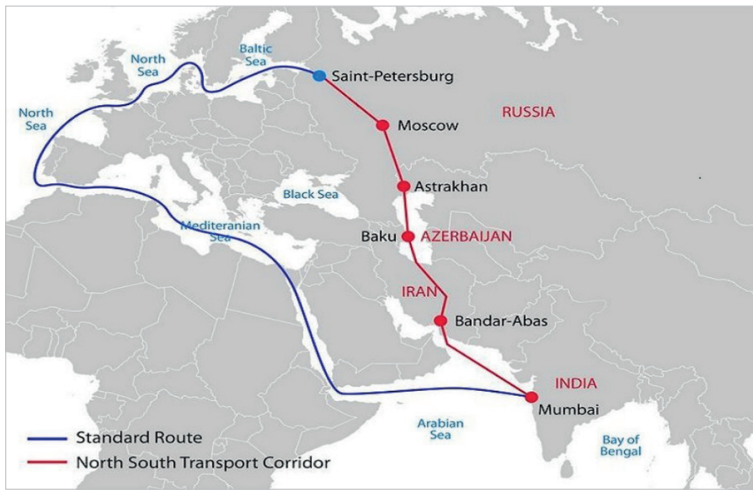
Today, Pakistan is facing major internal and external problems. After the alleged Regime Change operation by the US, toppling the democratically elected majority government, the Country has plunged deep into economic and political crises and instability, the instable Afghanistan is a source of terrorism, not only, inside Pakistan but also in the region, the dictations from IMF and blackmailing pressures from FATF have made Pakistan internally vulnerable. The extreme external pressures and pressures from the US to pull Pakistan into US China Containment Policy and to use Pakistani soil against Afghanistan, China, Iran and Russia and for controlling the region. Another major undeniable factor is Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry which is a huge challenge for the region and the Strait of Hormuz. Here once again Pakistan gets the heat due to its strong relations with both the countries and one of them is also a neighbor.

This pressure and its dire need to uplift its economy, joins Pakistan with Asian nations to have safe trade routes. Russia has recently opened the North South Trade Corridor (NSTC) from Saint Petersburg to Mumbai (Figure-3) through a short route via Iran, evading the longer route through Mediterranean Sea.

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<sup>14</sup> "Russia changes course, rejoins key Ukraine grain export deal". CNN, November 2, 2022. URL: <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/11/02/europe/russia-resumes-ukraine-grain-deal-intl/index.html>

<sup>15</sup> "National Security Strategy of the United States of America," The White House, Washington: 2017. URL: <https://www.hsdl.org/c/abstract/?docid=806478>



**Figure 3.** Russia's North South Transport Corridor

Source: <https://www.onthemosway.eu/international-north-south-transport-corridor-set-to-expand-capacity>

This route passes through Iran traversing Pakistan's coastline. It can be of great multilateral benefit if this route also passes through Pakistan. Although, Iran offers an opportunity through Bandar Abbas connecting to Mumbai yet the sanctions are a challenge therefore, inclusion of Pakistan can also provide alternative land routes, enhancing the strategic importance, in case the Port of Bandar Abbas has been blocked by the US or NATO Navies in the Persian Gulf.

The major oil trade emanating from Persian Gulf into the Indian Ocean Region and being hub of 40% global commercial trade, 64% of global oil trade, and 40% of global oil supply<sup>16</sup> the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea reinvigorates their unique place in the region. Asia and Africa, collectively inhabit 64% of global population. The presence of NATO Navies under the CENTCOM project of Combined Maritime Force (CMF) with three Task Forces CTF150, 151 and 152, (Figure-4) in the region is an alarming situation. About 80% of China's energy imports and 95% of goods transport pass through Indian Ocean.

All the major chokepoints of Indian Ocean are under the influence and military control of the US and India<sup>17</sup>. Although, their role has been portrayed

<sup>16</sup> Sajjad Ashraf. "America Seeks Partner to Contain China in the Indian Ocean", July 22, 2021, China US Focus. URL: <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/america-seeks-partner-to-contain-china-in-the-indian-ocean>

<sup>17</sup> Sajjad Ashraf. "America Seeks Partner to Contain China in the Indian Ocean", July 22, 2021, China US Focus. URL: <https://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/america-seeks-partner-to-contain-china-in-the-indian-ocean>

as "anti-Piracy/anti-terrorism" but often they are blocking shipments from and to Iran which changes their role to strategic and not the peace-keeping. It is to be noted that QUAD was also started to help Tsunami victims and providing vaccination but got converted into a strategic alliance against China in the Indian Ocean. CMF is no different, as and when required it will be used against not only Iran but also to block the influence of China and Russia in the region by chocking or blocking their sea trade routes into Indian Ocean. In addition, the CMF will also be controlling all oil trade from the Persian Gulf. At present over 80% of Pakistan's oil and gas supplies come from the Persian Gulf.

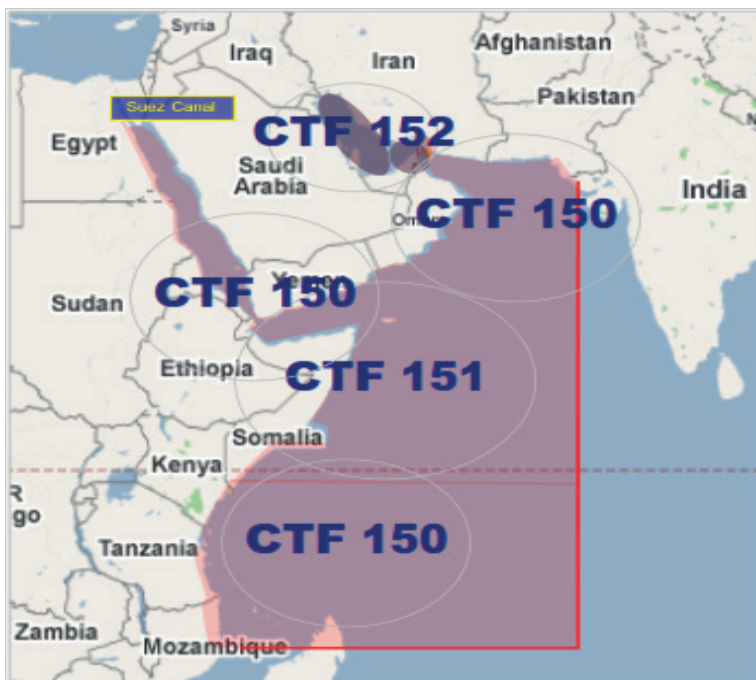


Figure 4. CMF Task Forces

This is the century of connectivity and trade and global politics revolving around geo-economics. Pakistan also provides with huge opportunity for digital connectivity through being a choke point of optical fiber network in the region. Pakistan has the potential to provide, from Gwadar, with a myriad of land, railways network and sea routes connecting Central Asia, Eurasia and Russia with South Asia, South East Asia, Middle East, Africa and Indian Ocean Rim on one hand, and for China with Africa, Middle East and Indian Ocean on the other (Figure-5).

The situation in Afghanistan and convergent stake of regional security for China, Pakistan and Russia entangle them further to join hands on var-

ious issues emanating from Afghan soil. The trade corridors through Pakistan can further help in bringing the regional countries together. Pakistan with its geostrategic and geopolitical significance also has imminent problem of its energy (oil and gas) needs and development of advanced infrastructure, yet it offers a huge return in shape of a shortest connectivity for the region. The port of Gwadar has the capacity to accommodate tankers, oil pipelines and cater to digital connectivity. The strategic significance of this port increases manifold in the present circumstances. It has the potential to provide considerable trade connectivity alternative to the region and can be joined with the routes of Central Asia, East Europe, Iran and Russia. The port had already 200 meters long three multipurpose berths with capacity of catering to 50,000 deadweight tonnage carriers at the rate of 12.5 meters depth. In 2020, government had allowed transit trade imports for further transportation to Afghanistan<sup>18</sup>.



**Figure 5.** Alternate Land Routes for Regional Connectivity

## Conclusion

It is an established reality that the US is a waning power exhibiting China as the declared target, which also knits Russia as a part of this containment target. China has shown clear signs of surviving this competition with an elevated status and after Russia-Ukraine conflict, Russia has also shown its capac-

<sup>18</sup> "Government to enhance Gwadar port's scope & capacity", China Radio International, August 9, 2020. URL: <http://cpecinfo.com/government-to-enhance-gwadar-ports-scope-capacity/>

ity to absorb the impact of stringent sanctions yet bringing Europe at a break-away point with the US on gas supplies. The Indo-Israel-US alliance is clearly challenging China and Russia which naturally involves Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. The bilateral concrete engagements pave the way for strengthened multilateralism. Pakistan and Russia have the capacity to bolster ties with huge mutual benefit for each other. However, new possibilities are to be discovered and created to find a way to bolster mutually, which primarily is available in connectivity. Pakistan, China, Iran, Russia and Turkiye also share so many interests in this new world of twenty first century. The opportunities and challenges vary from strategic to economic and trade to diplomacy. Russia, a large emerging economy, can capitalize upon Pakistan's strategic location, its potential making it seventh largest retail market globally and its fulcrum position to keep regional and global balance of power. In the wake of above challenges Pakistan offers a unique regional opportunity to International North South Trade Corridor via Iran for unhindered connectivity. The entire Asia, Europe, and Africa can capitalize upon Pakistan natural strategic advantage. Pakistan and Russia have the capacity to bolster economic and political ties with huge mutual benefits. Like China, Russia's strategic economic collaboration and support to Pakistan for its economic recovery in the fields of agriculture, energy, advanced industry, infrastructure and other sectors will mater a lot in Pakistan's struggle for self-reliance and pursuing its independent foreign policy. Russia can also capitalize upon Pakistan's strategic location and its fulcrum position to keep regional and global balance of power. It is a high time that we the regional countries must form a strategic economic cooperation bloc or a group, with common currency, common market with barter trade, mutual and shared economic development and to safeguard national economic security.

As late President Field Marshal Ayub Khan said "Pakistan needs friends not masters".

#### ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРАХ / INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Хаснаин Реза Мирза** – основатель и президент «Экономического форума Золотого кольца» (ГРЕФ) – аналитического центра по исследованию политики стратегического экономического сотрудничества, работающего над созданием нового Стратегического экономического блока из Китая, Центральной Азии, Ирана, Пакистана, России и Турции. Лахор, Пакистан

**Hasnain Reza Mirza** – Founder and President of the Golden Ring Economic Forum (GREF) – a Strategic Economic Cooperation Policy Research think-tank working on formation of a new Strategic Economic bloc of China, Central Asia, Iran, Pakistan, Russia and Turkey. Lahore, Pakistan

**Зайнаб Ахмед** – старший научный сотрудник аналитического центра «Экономический Форум Золотого Кольца» (ГРЕФ), канд. наук в области международных отношений, доцент Лахорского гарнизонного университета. Лахор, Пакистан.

**Zainab Ahmed** – Senior Research Fellow at GREF, Ph.D (International Relations), Assistant Professor at Lahore Garrison University. Lahore, Pakistan

***Раскрытие информации о конфликте интересов***

Авторы заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

***Информация о статье***

Поступила в редакцию: 12.10.2022. Одобрена после рецензирования: 26.10.2022.

Принята к публикации: 26.10.2022. Опубликовано: 29.12.2022.

Авторы прочитали и одобрили окончательный вариант рукописи.

***Conflicts of Interest Disclosure***

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

***Article info***

Submitted: 12.10.2022. Approved after peer reviewing: 26.10.2022.

Accepted for publication: 26.10.2022. Published: 29.12.2022.

The authors have read and approved the final manuscript.