

VIABILITY OF PAK-RUSSIA MILITARY COOPERATION

Adam Saud* & Mediha Abbasi**

Abstract

In international arena, there are no permanent friends or foes. This is clearly demonstrated by undulating nature of Pak-Russia relations, which kept on swaying with varying interests of two countries throughout the past century. It was only after 9/11, when Pakistan abandoned Afghan Taliban and became ally of US on war on terror, interests of Pakistan and Russia got converged. As a result of shared threats of terrorism and turning of their old allies to their rivals, the two countries were compelled to improve relations in various sectors particularly, military. The persistent joint exercises and frequent exchange of defense delegations during the past decade is indicator of growing military cooperation of two countries. This paper aims to analyzing the Pak-Russia military relations from the perspective of Regional Security Complex Theory while keeping in view the inherent turbulence in international politics.

Keywords: Pakistan-Russia, Military Cooperation, Joint Exercises, 9/11, Counter Terrorism

Introduction

9/11 proved to be a transformative force in international politics. It has not only disrupted the prevalent concepts of security doctrine but played major role in reorientation of foreign policies of many countries. Pakistan and Russia are two such countries, whose relations witnessed a significant change after 9/11. Before that they were considered as strategic rivals due to their diverging geopolitical objectives.¹ However, 9/11 led to convergence of

* Professor & Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Bahriya University, Islamabad, Pakistan.
Email: asaud.buic@bahria.edu.pk

** She holds Masters Degree in International Relations from Bahria University, Islamabad.
Email: medihal091@gmail.com

¹ Himayatullah Yaqubi, "Upward Trajectory in Pak-Russia Relations." *The News*, (October 2, 2016), <https://www.thenews.com.pk/amp/561842-trajectory-pak-russia-relations>.

interests of both at least in security matters which resulted in the improvement of relations during the next decade.

Combating terrorism has been the major driving force for the improvement of relations. Tensions between Pakistan and the US amid US-India strategic partnership also brought Moscow and Islamabad closer. Since Russia is the second largest arms and defense technology supplier to the world, Pakistan sees it as a good opportunity in this regard. As Moscow is facing economic hardships especially in the wake of Covid-19 and political crises, it wants to use its excessive arms stockpile and production as export commodity. Pakistan, being one of the good markets for the sale of defense equipment, offers an excellent opportunity to Russia.

This study evaluates the growing Pak-Russia defense cooperation and its possible future dimensions by analyzing the literature and recent developments through the perspective of Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT). This theory considers the effect of geographic proximity while encompassing anarchic nature of international system and results of balance of power theory. It postulates that the political and military threats play a major role in creating a sense of insecurity. The insecurity of a state has direct linkage to proximity. Due to interconnectedness of regional states, domestic security concerns of one state have effects on the other.

There are various factors which are considered while applying RSCT, such as, security vulnerabilities or fears of states in a region, inter-state relations, interaction of a region with its neighbor region, and role of global powers in the region and their mutual interaction. Thus, Pak-Russian military relations are analyzed while keeping in view the security threats two countries are facing from state and non-state actors, nature of their relations throughout the history, and their interaction with other regions and role of global powers such as USA and China in the region.

This study tries to determine the viability of Pak-Russia military relations in changing dynamics of international politics. The paper is divided into four sections: the first section explains the historical background of Pak-Russia military cooperation, the second section tries to explore the reasons for the improvements in Pak-Russia military cooperation after 9/11. Third section is about analysis of Russian and Chinese weapons supply to Pakistan and the last section discusses future of Pak-Russia military cooperation.

Background Of Pak-Russia Military Cooperation

Soon after independence, Pakistan's world view was shaped due to its security concerns and hostile geo-strategic environment. To counter the insecurity that resulted from both external threats and internal transition, defense policy of Pakistan was aimed at search for security. Primarily security augmentation in Pakistan was aimed to counter the threat from India and Afghanistan. Secondly, arrangements were to be made in Pakistan to offset military superiority of India in South Asia. Therefore, fulfillment of Defense

requirements has always been top priority for Pakistan as depicted by allocation of large proportion of budget to defense.²

Due to its defense needs, Pakistan aligned with western bloc and became the member of South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), later Baghdad pact, which was not appreciated by the communist world. Pakistan's membership to SEATO and CENTO was considered as direct threat to Soviet Union security by Moscow. It reacted to Pakistan's membership to these Pacts by supporting India and Afghanistan against Pakistan. During his 1955 Asia tour, Soviet Premier Bulganin gave unfriendly statements against Pakistan.³ Especially during his speech in India he not only openly supported India's stance towards Kashmir but also demanded that the right of self determination should also be given to the 5 million pathan tribesmen living in Pakistan's western regions.

During the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war, US-a close ally of Pakistan-suspended military aid to both Pakistan and India. On the other hand, India continued to receive arm supplies from Soviet Union.⁴ The US arms embargo forced Pakistan to seek China's help. China agreed by providing training to Pakistan Air Force (PAF) and military hardware such as heavy guns, tanks, and aircrafts in large number while becoming Pakistan's major arms supplier. Although, Chinese weaponry was much inferior to that of America's and it was unable to fulfill the needs of spare parts and replacements of US equipped forces,⁵ yet it came to Pakistan at the time of extreme need. .

Tashkent Agreement between India and Pakistan after the 1965 war was the ice breaking point between Soviet Union and Pakistan. During July 1967 a delegation led by Commander in chief of Pakistan Air force visited Russia and expressed satisfaction on outcome of visit afterwards, however the expected deal of arms did not materialize. In April 1968, Soviet Prime Minister Mr. Kosygin visited Pakistan. This visit resulted in an arms agreement which was finally signed in Moscow during a military delegation's visit under General Yehya Khan. The deal included provision of transport vehicles, spare parts, helicopters, 135mm guns, and tanks.⁶

After the agreement, several high-level visits were exchanged to expand the defense links. However, later the bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and USSR primarily remained focused on economic rather than defense linkages as Soviet Union wanted to enhance its relations with Pakistan without

² Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "Pakistan's Defense Policy." *Pakistan Horizon* 36 (1), (1983), 32-56.

³ Mohammed Ahsen Chaudhri, "Pakistan's Relations with the Soviet Union." *Asian Survey*, 6 (9), (University of California Press, 1966): 492-500.

⁴ Mohammed Ahsen Chaudhri, *Pakistan's Relations with the Soviet Union*, (1966).

⁵ Zubeida Hasan, "Pakistan's Relations with the U.S.S.R. in the 1960s." *The World Today* 25 (1), (1969), 26-35.

⁶ Zubeida Hasan, "Soviet Arms Aid to Pakistan and India." *Pakistan Horizon* 21 (4), (1968), 344-355.

compromising its links with India. Moscow also realized that its reproachment with Islamabad will no way break defense ties of later with the Western allies. They also assumed that it may also lead New Delhi stepping towards the West.⁷ Pakistan's political and defense ties with Soviet Union remained average with few ups and downs. Nevertheless, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 had major negative impacts on the bilateral relations.

The disintegration of Soviet Union brought structural changes with challenges as well as opportunities for both Pakistan and Russia. Islamabad tried to enhance its defense relations with Moscow in order to get maximum benefit of Russian expertise amid Pressler Amendment imposed on Pakistan by the US. Furthermore, military hardware offered by the Western countries especially France was too expensive to be afforded by Islamabad.⁸ Keeping in view the French sale of weapons to both India and Pakistan, Moscow also tried to follow the practice. The intention was shown by the then deputy foreign minister of Russia during his visit to Pakistan in 1994. However, on the pressure of pro-Indian lobby in Russia, prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin during his visit to New Delhi announced that Moscow does not have any such intentions.⁹ It resulted in the halt of dialogue on the export of military hardware to Pakistan.

Post 9/11 Improvement of Pak-Russia Military Cooperation

9/11 brought major changes in the geopolitics of the region. Pakistan distanced itself from Afghan Taliban and became US ally in its war against global terrorism. The whole international community condemned those attacks. Russian president was one of the first chief executives to call President Bush and condemn the attacks. He, later on, assured him Russian support in war on terror. Thus, both Pakistan and Russia became allies of US in the war as both countries were concerned about peace and stability in Afghanistan.¹⁰ Apart from common stance on war on terror, many other common grounds emerged which brought the two countries closer.

With the changing regional and global political dynamics, Moscow and Islamabad came out of their past rivalry mentality and started a new era of

⁷ Zubeida Hasan, *Soviet Arms Aid to Pakistan and India*, (1968).

⁸ Adnan Ali Shah, "Pakistan-Russia relations: Post Cold War Era," *Strategic Studies* 21, (2), (Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, 2001), 31-60

⁹ Samina Ahmed, *The military and foreign policy in Pakistan: With special reference to Pakistan-Soviet relations 1947-1971*. Ph.D. Thesis, (Department of political science, Canberra: Australian National university, 1988), 551

¹⁰ Mark N. Katz, "Less-Than-Great Expectations: The Pakistani-Russian Rapprochement." *Current History*, (March 1, 2005), 137-141. <https://online.ucpress.edu/currenthistory/article-abstract/104/680/137/108341/Less-Than-Great-Expectations-The-Pakistani-Russian?redirectedFrom=PDF>.

bilateral relations. Following are the reasons of improvement in Pak-Russia relations.

a. *Afghanistan Issue*

Throughout the history Pakistan-Russia relations remained lukewarm due to the Afghanistan factor. The post 9/11 era provided common grounds to both for reproachment. Despite bumpy roads, both states improved their relations substantially. Even Taliban regaining power in 2021 was taken as opportunity by them to improve working on Afghan stability. Islamabad and Moscow stressed the need of convincing all parties in Afghanistan to sit on negotiation table for establishment of all-inclusive government. Both Pakistan and Russia agree that a stable government in Afghanistan is not only a way to counter Al Qaeda and Daesh, but trans-regional connectivity where Russia can have easy and secure access to the Indian Ocean besides facilitating the Chinese BRI project.¹¹ Furthermore, both stressed that Afghanistan needs to be constructively engaged rather isolated. Both agreed that Afghanistan assets must be unfreeze in order to help Taliban regime spending on infrastructure development.

b. *US-India Alliance*

Another important reason of inclination of Pakistan and Russia towards each other is the regional political realignment. Although, during the Cold War Pakistan was ally of USA and India was ally of USSR, their closeness has changed now. In the post 9/11 era, India and USA came closer to each other due to dynamics of international politics.¹² As US was Pakistan's main source of military technology, Pakistani officials are of view that balance of power have been tipped by tilting of US interests towards India. Thus, Pakistan is looking for new venues to balance the conventional parity in order to ensure credible minimum deterrence against India.¹³ Narendra Modi and Donald Trump's administration agreed on close cooperation in defense sector where militaries of two countries can access each other's facilities for repairs and supplies. This development has reduced India's dependence on Russia as exclusive military supplier to a preferred defense partner. While on the other hand, Pakistan searched for an alternative arms supplier amid Pakistan-US

¹¹ Muhammad Hamza Tanvir, "Pakistan and Russia: Improving Bilateral Ties & Regional Stability." *Paradigm Shift*, (September 22, 2021). <https://www.paradigmshift.com.pk/pakistan-and-russia/>.

¹² Saira Bano, "Pakistan: Lessons from the India-US Nuclear Deal." *The Diplomat*, (June 22, 2015). <https://thediplomat.com/2015/06/pakistan-lessons-from-the-india-us-nuclear-deal/>.

¹³ Tim Craig, "As the US moves closer to India, Pakistan looks to Russia." *The Guardian*, (February 3, 2015). <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/03/pakistan-russia-us-obama-india>.

tensions. Russia is one of the viable options in this regard. Hence two countries are coming closer gradually.¹⁴

c. *Diversification of Russian Foreign Policy*

War with Ukraine has deteriorated Russia's relations with the West and is facing US and EU sanctions. In order to deal with dynamic geo-economic and geostrategic environment, Russia updated its military and security documents, adopting a new military document with new foreign policy concept on 20th November 2016 and Documents of National security strategy and Maritime doctrine of Russia in 2020. These policies give Afghanistan and South Asian security situation more importance because of its direct negative impacts on international security. Furthermore, Russia wants to transform Indian Ocean into zone of stability, peace and good neighborly relations. Despite of big geographical distance, the geo-economic and geopolitical issues of South Asia reverberate with Russia besides Pakistan. Since both are facing similar challenges like terrorism, insecurity and instability in Afghanistan and broader region, economic development and nuclear security, convergence is a natural outcome.¹⁵ Islamabad and Moscow have joined different working groups in this regard.

d. *Energy Cooperation*

Being one of the largest producers of energy in the world, Russia has been a principal exporter of petroleum and natural gas to EU. Pakistan, on the other hand, is facing severe energy crisis since last two decades. It relies on the Gulf states for the import of energy. In 202-23, Pakistan imported energy for its domestic needs of worth \$ 13 billion.¹⁶ Pakistan considers Russia as one of the viable alternative options for its energy needs. In 2015, a MoU was signed between Russia and Pakistan to lay a gas pipeline from Karachi to Lahore connecting LNG terminals of 12.4 billion m³ /year which was expected to be completed in 2023.¹⁷ In 2017, for potential investment of \$4 billion, a MoU was signed between Pakistan and Russia to aid exploration and development in Pakistan via joint ventures and cooperation.

¹⁴ Yasir Hussain, "Pakistan-Russia Relations: Old Players on a New Trajectory," *South Asian Voices*, (August 3, 2017). <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-russia-relations-old-players-new-trajectory/>.

¹⁵ Ian Storey, "What Russia's "Turn to the East" Means for Southeast Asia." *Perspective*, (December 3, 2015), 1-10. https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2015_67.pdf.

¹⁶ Adnan Amir, "Pakistan Pins Hopes on Russian Energy Imports Shrouded in Secrecy", (16 June 2024), <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/Pakistan-pins-hopes-on-Russian-energy-imports-shrouded-in-secrecy>

¹⁷ Claudia Chia, Zheng Haiqi, "Russia-Pakistan Economic Relations: Energy Partnership and the China Factor." (ISAS Working Paper, October 6, 2021), <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/russia-pakistan-economic-relations-energy-partnership-and-the-china-factor/>.

In 2018 MoU was signed for middle to Pakistan offshore gas pipeline of 1500km worth \$10 billion with underground gas storages. In February 2019, during Russian delegation's visit to Pakistan, Russian investment of \$14 billion was announced in energy sector of Pakistan along with synergies with Lukoil, Tatneft and Gazprom.¹⁸ The Pakistan Stream gas pipeline project including launch of virtual LNG pipelines and storages, establishment of oil and gas refineries and investment in gas and oil storages; is likely to be more beneficial to Pakistan than Russia. The facilities and equipment will be provided by Russia whereas supervision of construction process will be provided by Pakistan thus giving Pakistan more influence over development. The major proportion of the gas to be transported via pipeline will be imported from Qatar.¹⁹ Besides these agreements, Pakistan had imported little less than 100,000 tons of crude oil from Russia in the recent past.²⁰ In a recent meeting between president Asif Ali Zardari and the Russian Ambassador to Pakistan in April 2024, strengthening of bilateral relations especially in the fields of security and energy have been stressed.

Indicators Of Improvements in Pak-Russia Military Cooperation

In pre-9/11 era, sustainable defense relations could not be achieved between Pakistan and Russia although Pakistan showed interest in Russian weapons in numerous times in history. But Pakistan did not achieve much success in this domain due to Russian inclination towards India. 9/11 and India USA closeness helped improving Pakistan and Russia relations in various domains including military. Following are some of the indicators of improvement in Pak-Russia military cooperation.

a. Military Delegations and Visits

In 2009, Pakistan showed interest in buying Mi-35 assault helicopters from Russia. Although, Islamabad had already received Russian Mi-17 transport helicopters in 2002, but they were for rescue aviation in case of disaster.²¹ In 2010, Russian Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin, declared military ties between

¹⁸ Syed Imran Khan and Karim Haider, "The strategic Relations of Pakistan and Russia in 21st Century." *Research Journal of Social Sciences and Economics Review* 2 (1), (2021): 259-265. [https://doi.org/10.36902/rjsser-vol2-iss1-2021\(259-265\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/rjsser-vol2-iss1-2021(259-265)).

¹⁹ Olga Malik, "Pakistan–Russia Gas Stream: Opportunities and Risks of New Flagship Energy Project." (RIAC, December 13, 2021). <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/columns/asian-kaleidoscope/pakistan-russia-gas-stream-opportunities-and-risks-of-new-flagship-energy-project/>.

²⁰ Abid Hussain, "Pakistan Gets First Shipment of Russian Crude Under Discount Rates", *Al-Jazeera*, (12 June 2023), URL; <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/12/pakistan-gets-first-shipment-of-russian-crude-under-discount-deal>

²¹ Aleksander Głogowski, "Strategic shift in Pakistan-Russia relations and its influence on security in South Asia." Edited by Malkhiz Nakashidze, (Budapest: The International Institute for Academic Development, 2016), 125-130.

Pakistan and Russia. In 2011, Pakistan's Army Chief General Kayani visited Russia to convince Russian leadership on reorienting their policy regarding arm sales to Pakistan. Russian foreign Minister during his visit to Pakistan in 2012, stated that it is unlikely that Russia will sell fighter aircrafts or air defense system to Pakistan but the sale of dual use system i.e. Mi-17 helicopters is likely.²² In April 2013, Russian Air Chief Marshal visited Pakistan to discuss the military deals.²³

In 2014, all 3 Commander in Chiefs of armed forces of Russia visited Pakistan. During the visit of Russian defense minister, Sergei Shoigu, to Pakistan in 2014, an agreement was signed between the two countries on enhancing the defense cooperation. Russia also decided to lift arm embargo from Pakistan that had been imposed on Pakistan since Soviet Era. Moreover, two sides also decided to strengthen bilateral relations as their views converged on most of the regional and international issues. (Pakistan Russia sign milestone military co-op pact 2014) A Russian military mission visited the war-torn North Waziristan region near the Pak-Afghan border in 2017. This visit helped Russia to analyze the existing situation of Af-Pak region through the military lens.²⁴

In 2018, foreign minister of Pakistan visited Russia on invitation of Russian counterpart and signed agreement on establishment of a commission on military cooperation to deal with threat of IS in the region. (Foreign minister visits Moscow on invitation of Russian counterpart 2018). In April 2018, Pakistan's army chief Gen Bajwa visited Russia to meet Russian ground forces commander, where Russia expressed keenness to expand existing military to military cooperation. (Gen Bajwa meets counterpart during official visit to Russia 2018). Apart from that, Joint Military Consultative Committee is another platform of two countries military cooperation. The first meeting of JMCC was held in Rawalpindi in August 2018. In 2019, Second meeting of JMCC was held in Moscow, where discussions were made on areas of mutual cooperation such as intelligence cooperation, joint exercises, military training and defense industrial cooperation. (Pakistan, Russia reaffirm commitment to enhance military ties 2019). In September 2021, the third meeting of JMCC was held between Pakistan's defense Secretary and Russia's deputy defense minister where regional stability and evolving situation of Afghanistan also came under discussion.

²² Besakh Singh, 2016. *Pakistan and Russia Relationship: Changing Dynamics in the Post-Cold-War Era*. (MS Thesis), (Bathinda: Centre for South and Central Asian Studies School of Global Relations., Central University of Punjab, 2016), 1-111.

²³ Feroz Hassan Khan, "Russia-Pakistan Strategic Relations: An Emerging Entente Cordiale." *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, (2021), 42-64.

²⁴ Kashif Hussain, "Russia-Pakistan Strategic Convergence: Countering Daesh in Afghanistan." *South Asian Voice*, (April 11, 2018), <https://southasianvoices.org/russia-pakistan-strategic-convergence-daesh/>.

b. Military Hardware

Pakistan's Army Chief, General Raheel Sharif visited Russia in summer 2015. Three months later, a deal was signed between the two countries on sale of Mi-35M Assault helicopters to Pakistan. Pakistan further expressed its interest in a wide range of Russian weaponry such as combat aircrafts particularly SU 35, air defense systems and advanced tanks.²⁵ In April 2018, Pakistan's defense minister, Khurram Dastagir revealed in an interview to Sputnik that Pakistan is holding direct talks with Russia to purchase T-90 tanks, air defense systems and Su-35 jets. However, no official confirmation has been made by Russia regarding any such deal so far.²⁶

c. Joint Exercises

Pakistan and Russia have been conducting joint military exercise Called Druzhbha (meaning friendship) consistently since 2016. The first ever Druzhbha exercise was conducted in Pakistan's province of KP from 24th September to 10th October 2016 to counter the threats of terrorist operations of IS branch at Khorasan province. The exercise continued despite strong objection of India. Druzhbha II was conducted in Russia in 2017 between special forces of Russian and Pakistani armies. The two countries maintained continuous streak of Druzhbha exercises despite all hurdles. Druzhbha VI was conducted from 28th September to 9th October 2021, in Krasnodar territory at Molokino training range focused on developing and strengthening military cooperation between two countries.²⁷

Apart from Druzhbha exercises, Russia has also been participating in Arabian Monsoon Naval drills along with Pakistan in 2014 and 2015. In 2017, in AMAN Naval exercise constituting 35 countries, which was spearheaded by Pakistan Navy, the largest antisubmarine warship of Russia, named Severomorsk participated. The AMAN-19 exercise of Pakistan navy was the first exercise after 10 years when Russia participated in a joint exercise along with NATO countries. This exercise included Malaysia, Italy, Turkey, Australia, UK, US, China and Russia. A naval group of Black Sea Fleet consisting of rescue tug SB-739, the patrol vessel Dmitry Rogachev, and frigate Admiral Grigorovich along with deck-based helicopter represented Russia. After this exercise, Russian and Pakistani navies came closer and they exchanged their experienced and showed determination to promote stability and peace in Arabian Ocean.²⁸

²⁵ Rashid Siddiqi, "Prospects for Russia-Pakistan Rapprochement." *Strategic Studies*, 37 (2), (Islamabad: Institute of strategic studies Islamabad, 2017), 58-73.

²⁶ Shubhankar Basu, "Review of Russia-Pakistan Defence Cooperation: Reflection of Emerging Geo-Political Realities." (Vivekananda International Foundation, February 2, 2019). <https://www.vifindia.org/>.

²⁷ Druzhbha. *Joint Russian-Pakistani Exercise*. (October 14, 2021), <https://www.joint-forces.com/exercise-news/47412-druzhba-2021-joint-russian-pakistani-exercise>.

²⁸ Zamir Ahmed Awan, "Aman-21: Pakistan-Russia in close cooperation for peace." (Russian International Affairs Council, February 26, 2021),

In 2019, Pakistan army participated in Russian hosted multi-national a week-long military exercise called Tsentr along with other SCO member countries. The exercise was aimed at promoting regional stability and peace by fighting against international terrorism. (Pakistan Army Participates in Multinational Military Exercise Tsentr 2019 in Russia 2019). In 2020, Pakistan participated in another joint military drill called Kavkaz in Astrakhan, Russia along with Azerbaijan, China and Belarus where participants displayed their skills and technology through war games, joint trainings and military drills. Kavkaz offered a golden opportunity to Pakistan to cultivate friendly relations with central Asian states in the absence of India.²⁹

According to regional security comple theory, these joint exercises depict how Pakistan and Russia view the regional security challenges. The two countries are taking preemptive measures to tackle with the mutual security threats by cooperating with each other. These exercises also provide the mean of interaction for different regions.

Viability of Military Hardware Trade Between Pakistan and Russia

a. Pakistan's needs for military hardware

The Pakistan Armed forces were established after the division of the British Indian Armed Forces in 1947. Since its inception, the Pakistan army has been procuring weapons from abroad and trying to maintain a balance between its arms and fighting forces. The modernization of the Pakistan Army began during the Ayub period and continued under successive regimes. The memories of wars and defeats have been instrumental in sustaining the military buildup of Pakistan. Pakistan's military capability has grown over time.³⁰ The country's nuclear and conventional forces are structured against a potential threat from India, with major investment in military nuclear programs. The navy and air force are modernizing their inventory while improving their precision-strike and ISR capabilities.³¹ Pakistan also devotes a large portion of its budget to defense expenditures and is ranked 23rd among

<https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/columns/asian-kaleidoscope/aman-21-pakistan-russia-in-close-cooperation-for-peace/>.

²⁹ "Pakistan, Russia and the New Central Asian Alliance." (CSPR). Accessed February 1, 2022. <https://cspr.pk/pakistan-russia-and-the-new-central-asian-alliance/>.

³⁰ Christine Fair, "Army's Defence of Pakistan's Ideological Frontiers", (May 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199892709.003.0004>

³¹ Amjad Mehmood and Adil Sultan, "Impact of India's ISR Capabilities on South Asian Security Dynamics", *Strategic Studies*, 41(4), (2021), <https://issi.org.pk/impact-of-indias-isr-capabilities-on-south-asian-security-dynamics/>

40 countries with the highest military expenditure, according to SIPRI report.³²

Since 1947, Pakistan's main goal has been to counter India's military power. There have been three and a half conflicts and many small fights between the two countries. The Kashmir conflict caused two and a half wars (1974/48, 1965 and Kargil). A third war in 1971 led to Pakistan breaking apart and Bangladesh becoming independent.³³ To counter India's threat, Pakistan emphasizes on strengthening of its military.

Pakistan's army is the largest among services and has tanks, armored vehicles, artillery, and helicopters, aircraft, and various other equipment. Air force is the second largest and has fighter squadrons that operate combat aircraft. They also have reconnaissance and transport aircraft, trainee aircraft, and French and American missile systems. The navy is the smallest and has submarines, destroyers, frigates, patrol and coastal combatants, and naval aviation squadrons.³⁴

US had been the major arms supplier to Pakistan. During the India-Pakistan war in 1965, the US put an embargo on weapon sales to Pakistan, which made Pakistan realize that they needed to make their own weapons to avoid relying on other countries. As a result of defense industrialization, Pakistan has facilities for light weapons, the assembly and overhaul of small arms, propeller driven airplane, fighter aircraft, tanks, night vision devices, submarines, radar and ballistic missiles.³⁵

In 1985, the presidential declarative in Pakistan decreed to procure weapons through transfer of technology (ToT). Pakistan learned to develop its weapons industry through experience. They got help from friendly countries like China and signed ToT agreements to produce weapons. The plan was to start with licensed production and then progress to local production. However, achieving maximum production for a weapon system through gradual deletion has not worked for Pakistan because of lack of R&D culture and funds³⁶ Therefore, the country still has reliance on foreign suppliers for modernization of its military. Pakistan is dependent upon number of foreign countries for

³² Nan Tian, Diego Lopes Da Silva, Xiao Liang and Lorenzo Scarazzato, "Trends In World Military Expenditure", *SIPRI Fact Sheet*, (April 2024), https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf

³³ Ayesha Siddiqua, "Political Economy of National Security", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 37(44/45) (Nov. 2-15, 2002), pp. 4545-4549.

³⁴ Ayesha Siddiqua, "Political Economy of National Security", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 37 (44/45) (Nov. 2-15, 2002), pp. 4545-4549.

³⁵ Ayesha Siddiqua, "Pakistan's defense industry: Shifting gears", *The Rusi Journal*, 146(5), (October 2001), 1-5, DOI: [10.1080/03071840108446691](https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840108446691)

³⁶ Farhan Bukhari, "China enables Pakistan to become a defense exporter", *Nikkei Asia*, (11 October 2019), URL: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-enables-Pakistan-to-become-a-defense-exporter>

procurement of weapon systems and components. China is the largest and most reliable supplier of military hardware to Pakistan.

b. China Vs Russia as Pakistan's military hardware suppliers

In 1951, Pakistan and China established formal diplomatic relations. Initially, their relationship was not strong due to Pakistan's affiliation with the Western Block. However, the two countries improved their relationship after the Bandung Conference in 1955. The relationship became stronger after the 1962 conflict between India and China and the 1963 frontier agreement between China and Pakistan.³⁷ In 1966, China provided Pakistan with \$250 million worth of military equipment, including anti-aircraft guns, F-6 fighters and T-9 Tanks. This led to Pakistan granting China the status of Most Favorite Nation and signing a trade agreement with it. Over the years, China has continued to support Pakistan's military capabilities through joint military exercises, defense projects, and arms exports. In 2009, China agreed to sell advanced fighter jets to Pakistan, and in recent years, China has also helped to strengthen Pakistan's navy.³⁸

According to a study by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, China is the fifth-largest arms supplier in the world, with 35% of its arms exports going to Pakistan between 2013 and 2017. In recent years, Pakistan has become increasingly reliant on Chinese arms exports due to deteriorating relations with other suppliers, especially the USA.³⁹

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) found that 60 countries are exporters of major weapons in 2017-21, but many are minor exporters. The top 25 suppliers made up 99% of total exports, and the top five (the United States, Russia, France, China, and Germany) accounted for 77% of exports. The US and Russia have historically been the largest suppliers, but the US outranked Russia by 108% in exports in 2017-21, compared to a 34% increase in 2012-16. The US exported 39% of the global total, 14% higher than in 2012-16, while Russia's exports decreased by 26% and made up 19% of the global total, down from 24% in 2012-16. France's exports rose 59% between 2012-16 and 2017-21, while China and Germany's decreased by 31% and 19%, respectively.⁴⁰

³⁷ Javeria Jahangir, "Pakistan China Defence Cooperation and Evolving International Relations", *Forman Journal of Social Sciences*, 2, (2022), DOI: 10.32368/FJSS.20220207

³⁸ Micheal Martina, "China to speed up delivery of 50 fighter jets to Pakistan", *Reuters*, (20 May 2011), <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-pakistan-idUSTRE74J0S520110520/>

³⁹ Pieter D. Wezeman, Alexandra Kuimova And Siemon T. Wezeman, "Trends In International Arms Transfers", *SPRI Fact Sheet*, (March 2022), https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/fs_2203_at_2021.pdf

⁴⁰ Pieter D. Wezeman, Alexandra Kuimova And Siemon T. Wezeman, "Trends In International Arms Transfers", *SPRI Fact Sheet*, (March 2022), URL: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/fs_2203_at_2021.pdf

For many years, Pakistan's military relied on weapons from Western and Chinese suppliers. However, over time, the country has shown increasing interest in Russian weapons systems. These weapons systems have a strong reputation and are well-regarded in Pakistan due to their use in the war in Afghanistan. Russia in 2014 lifted arm embargo from Pakistan and signed many defense agreements with Pakistan.

From 2017 to 2021, Russia was the third biggest exporter of weapons to Pakistan and China was also a significant buyer of Russian arms. During the Cold War, many of the weapons China supplied to Pakistan were manufactured in Russia. The Russian armed forces aimed at ensuring national sovereignty and territorial integrity and enhancing Russia's influence globally. Russia is a prominent member of both the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Russia continues to maintain the second largest nuclear arsenal in the world.

However, Russia, which is the world's second largest importer of defense equipment, was greatly impacted by the invasion of Ukraine. It is expected that Russia's traditional clients may face supply shortages and difficulty conducting business transactions with the defense sector, as well as quality issues with Russian military equipment due to the conflict. The introduction of controls on advanced technologies crucial for the defense industry may also affect Russia's ability to export.⁴¹

Future of Pak-Russia Military Cooperation

Pakistan –Russia military cooperation, which started after 9/11 in general and intensified after 2014 specifically, has had a great impact on the region. The reconciliation between Pakistan and Russia indicates a shift in the South Asia. Russia is an important country, due to its geopolitical influence and great power stature, whereas Pakistan is a crucial player in international relations, due to its geostrategic position, population and possession of nuclear arsenals.⁴² Military cooperation of Pakistan and Russia has potential to leave deep impacts on regional and international level.

Currently, the military relationships between Pakistan and Russia are focused primarily on joint exercises, training programs and cooperation in areas of mutual interests. As far as trade of military weapons is concerned it has not progressed much, although Pakistan's main interest in Russia has always been the military arms of the country as Russia did not have strong enough

⁴¹ Stasa Salacanian, "How the Ukraine war is impacting Russia's arms sales to the Middle East", *The Arab News*, (31 October 2022), <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/ukraine-war-and-russias-arms-sales-middle-east>

⁴² Misbah Arif, "Pak-Russia rapprochement." *Daily Times*, (August 6, 2018) <https://dailytimes.com.pk/278689/pak-russia-rapprochement/>.

economy like other powers to provide financial assistance to Pakistan⁴³ But Russia has always been careful in selling its weapons to Pakistan. In past, Russia relied on third countries for supplying defense technology to Pakistan. For example, T-80 battle tanks were supplied to Pakistan through Ukraine, and RD-93 engines of JF-17 reached Pakistan via China. Despite Pakistan's interest in Russian air defense system and tanks, Russia is hesitant to selling these to Pakistan probably due to Indian factor or trust deficit because of their past rivalry.

Some recent advancements have emerged in international politics that have added further uncertainty. Withdrawal of US from Afghanistan, Ukraine crisis and abrupt regime change in Pakistan have potential to influence Pak-Russia relations in general and military cooperation in particular.

US withdrawal from Afghanistan indicates weakening of western alliance, which can be replaced by new alliance by Pakistan, China and Russia. Takeover of Taliban in Afghanistan offer a strategic advantage to Pakistan. It is believed that Taliban led government can be influenced by Islamabad.⁴⁴ Russian officials indicated their approval of Taliban government and expressed willingness to work with Taliban to crush terrorism. Along with Pakistan and Russia, China also welcomed Taliban government. This factor can provide a fertile ground for Pak-Russia relations, which can lead to further improvement in their military cooperation.⁴⁵

Another current development in international politics is Ukraine crisis. Putin declared that Russian security is at threat because of Ukraine joining NATO alliances. Although it has been made clear that NATO is not planning to send combat troops to Ukraine rather just advisers, field hospitals and weapons will be offered. However, several thousand troops have been deployed in Poland and Baltic states for the first time which can go to Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. After the Russian attack on Ukraine, the economy and financial institutions of the country are constantly targeted by west.⁴⁶

⁴³ Feroz Hassan Khan, "Russia-Pakistan Strategic Relations: An Emerging Entente Cordiale", *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2473361/russiapakistan-strategic-relations-an-emerging-entente-cordiale/>

⁴⁴ Ron Synovitz, "Regional Powers Seek to Fill Vacuum Left by West's Retreat From Afghanistan." *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, (December 25, 2021), <https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-power-vacuum-russia-iran-china-pakistan/31624955.html>.

⁴⁵ Nilofar Sakhi, "How Russia, China, and Iran will shape Afghanistan's future", (2021)

⁴⁶ Paul Kirby, "Why is Russia invading Ukraine and what does Putin want?" *BBC News*, (February 27, 2022), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56720589>

The US sanctions on Russia, under CAATSA (countering America's Adversaries Through *Sanctions* Act) act, had a significant impact on the Russian economy. The World Bank, IMF, and (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) OECD predicted that Russia's GDP would drop by at least 3.4% in 2022, with a continued decline in 2023. The war and sanctions had a major impact on Russian companies, with the Moscow Exchange's main index falling by more than one third. The invasion also had a serious economic consequence on Pakistan, including political instability, rising inflation and low economic growth. The energy sector was also affected as prices rose due to fears over Russia's natural gas exports through Ukraine. In 2020, Russia exported \$699 million worth of products, with wheat as the top product, to Pakistan. After the invasion, Pakistan signed a trade deal with Russia to import 2MT of wheat and natural gas.⁴⁷

Amid Ukraine crisis, Pakistan's PM Imran Khan visited Russia. According to Pakistan's foreign minister the implications of visit were well discussed beforehand with the stakeholders. He stated that "we have to import 2 million tons of wheat from Russia. Secondly, we have signed agreements with them to import natural gas because Pakistan's own gas reserves are depleting."⁴⁸ Despite US warning, Pakistan did not condemn the Russian attack on Ukraine and decided to play a neutral role by suggesting both Russia and Ukraine to resolve their conflicts by talks instead of resorting to war. This decision of Pakistan was major indicator of Country's inclination towards Russia.

In April 2022, Imran Khan's government was overthrown by a vote of no confidence in the parliament. Khan blamed US for toppling his regime to influence the foreign policy of Pakistan which was inclined towards Russia. The new foreign minister and army chief condemned the Russian attack on Ukraine. Russian Foreign Minister Maria Zakharova, in her statement blamed US for interfering in domestic matters of Pakistan. On 11th April 2022, Shahbaz Sharif became the new Prime minister of Pakistan. Congratulatory messages were received by Sharif from Putin along with other heads of states. According to Russian embassy in Pakistan, Putin expressed his willingness to continue the development of Pak-Russia relations, and partnership for settlement of Afghanistan issue and countering international terrorism, which was welcomed by Sharif.

In the wake of current events, the clouds of uncertainty which were surrounding the Pak-Russia defense cooperation, have become dense. In the constantly shifting dynamics of international and regional politics, the nature

⁴⁷ Shakeel Ahmad, "How Can Military Conflict between Russia and Ukraine Affect Pakistan Economy", (18 May 2022), https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4093222

⁴⁸ Ayaz Gul, "Khan After Putin Visit: Pakistan to Import Wheat Gas from Russia", *Voice of America*, (28 Feb 2022), <https://www.voanews.com/a/khan-after-putin-visit-pakistan-to-import-wheat-gas-from-russia-/6463734.html>

of alliances is not very pronounced. During Ukraine crisis, when the west was imposing economic sanctions on Russia, India has supported the Russian economy by buying oil in Russian currency. Although India has close ties with west. Khan's government was overthrown in Pakistan and US was blamed to influence the Russian inclined foreign policy of Pakistan. But current government in Pakistan, which is labelled as US puppet by Khan, seem to have no animosity towards Russia. The mutual threats and interests are binding force between the two countries. US and India are primary forces which wanted to hamper any growth of military relations between Pakistan and Russia. But their explicit and implicit efforts, when combined with chaotic international politics and geopolitical factors, have effect that cannot be predicted in advance.

Advancements in Pak-Russia military relations are hampered by the trust deficit that arise from uncertainties. In the wake of recent developments and deepening of uncertainties, this trust deficit doesn't seem to be alleviated which has potential to prove detrimental to the growth of Pak-Russia military relations. But the shared vulnerabilities of two countries due to their geographic proximity can eventually lead to the situation where holistic military cooperation will be inevitable. Apart from that, amid Ukraine war, western sanctions are aimed at crippling the Russian economy, which can compel Russia to extend the trade its military arsenal to boost its economy. On the other hand, due to the ongoing war, the military arsenal is something that is required the most by Russia.

During Ukraine war, Russia is also facing many challenges. The situation in Ukraine is expected to be prolonged due to several factors. Firstly, the limited capabilities of Russian forces, which has resulted in a slow offensive. Secondly, the strong resolve of the Ukrainian government, military and people and the support they are getting from US. Lastly, the geographic nature of Ukraine, particularly the challenges posed by urban areas, which make it difficult for mechanized forces to operate effectively. Urban warfare results in high casualties and significant destruction, making it difficult to quickly secure cities. The Russian invasion has so far been slow, indicating a lack of logistical capabilities and a risk-averse approach.

Under these circumstances, which dictate the Russian defense complex to focus on internal needs for some time in future, another layer of uncertainty is added between the potential of trade of military hardware between Pakistan and Russia.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to analyze military cooperation between Pakistan and Russia in the context of their fluctuating relations in past and transformative improvements in their relation after 9/11. It was found that in the pre-9/11 era, the nature of relations between Pakistan and Russia remained fluctuating. Despite Pakistan's interest in Russian defense technology, the

effort of military cooperation between two countries resulted in little or no success. After 9/11, interests of Pakistan and Russia were converged. Their military relations also improved due to the joint threat of terrorism and turning away of their old defense allies. The improved military relations between the two countries are depicted by increased exchange of defense related delegations and joint exercises which are being held consistently since 2016. But as far as trade of military hardware is concerned, it has not shown any significant progress although the primary interest of Pakistan in Russia has always been Russia's defense weaponry. But Russia is cautious probably due to trust deficit between two countries while keeping in view their fluctuating history. India also exerts opposing force in trade of defense weapons between Pakistan and Russia. The recent developments further increased uncertainty in Pak-Russia relations in general and military cooperation in particular.

References

- Ahmad, S. "How Can Military Conflict between Russia and Ukraine Affect Pakistan Economy". May, 08 2022. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4093222
- Ahmed, S. *The military and foreign policy in Pakistan: With special reference to Pakistan-Soviet relations 1947-1971*. Ph.D. Thesis. Department of political science, Canberra: Australian National university, 1988.
- Amir, A. "Pakistan Pins Hopes on Russian Energy Imports Shrouded in Secrecy". 16 June 2024. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Economy/Pakistan-pins-hopes-on-Russian-energy-imports-shrouded-in-secrecy>
- Arif, M. "Pak-Russia rapprochement." *Daily Times*. August 6, 2018. <https://dailytimes.com.pk/278689/pak-russia-rapprochement/>.
- Awan, Z.A. "Aman-21: Pakistan-Russia in close cooperation for peace." Russian International Affairs Council, February 26, 2021. <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/columns/asian-kaleidoscope/aman-21-pakistan-russia-in-close-cooperation-for-peace/>.
- Bano, S. "Pakistan: Lessons from the India-US Nuclear Deal." *The Diplomat*, June 22, 2015. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/06/pakistan-lessons-from-the-india-us-nuclear-deal/>.
- Basu, S. *Review of Russia-Pakistan Defence Cooperation: Reflection of Emerging Geo-Political Realities*. Vivekananda International Foundation, February 2, 2019. <https://www.vifindia.org/>.
- Bukhari, F. "China enables Pakistan to become a defense exporter", *Nikkei Asia*. 11 October 2019. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/China-enables-Pakistan-to-become-a-defense-exporter>
- Chaudhri, M.A. "Pakistan's Relations with the Soviet Union." *Asian Survey*, 6 (9), University of California Press, 1966.
- Chia, C. & Haiqi, Z. "Russia-Pakistan Economic Relations: Energy Partnership and the China Factor." ISAS Working Paper, October 6, 2021.

- <https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/papers/russia-pakistan-economic-relations-energy-partnership-and-the-china-factor/>.
- Craig, T. "As the US moves closer to India, Pakistan looks to Russia." *The Guardian*, February 3, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/03/pakistan-russia-us-obama-india>.
- Druzhiba. *Joint Russian-Pakistani Exercise*. October 14, 2021. <https://www.joint-forces.com/exercise-news/47412-druzhiba-2021-joint-russian-pakistani-exercise>.
- Fair, C. "Army's Defence of Pakistan's Ideological Frontiers", May 2014. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199892709.003.0004>
- Głogowski, A. "Strategic shift in Pakistan-Russia relations and its influence on security in South Asia." Edited by Malkhiz Nakashidze, Budapest: The International Institute for Academic Development, 2016.
- Gul, A. "Khan After Putin Visit: Pakistan to Import Wheat Gas from Russia", *Voice of America*, 28 Feb 2022. <https://www.voanews.com/a/khan-after-putin-visit-pakistan-to-import-wheat-gas-from-russia-/6463734.html>
- Hasan, Z. "Pakistan's Relations with the U.S.S.R. in the 1960s." *The World Today* 25 (1), 1969.
- Hasan, Z. "Soviet Arms Aid to Pakistan and India." *Pakistan Horizon* 21 (4), 1968.
- Hussain, A. "Pakistan Gets First Shipment of Russian Crude Under Discount Rates", *Al-Jazeera*, 12 June 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/6/12/pakistan-gets-first-shipment-of-russian-crude-under-discount-deal>
- Hussain, K. "Russia-Pakistan Strategic Convergence: Countering Daesh in Afghanistan." *South Asian Voice*, April 11, 2018. <https://southasianvoices.org/russia-pakistan-strategic-convergence-daesh/>.
- Hussain, Y. "Pakistan-Russia Relations: Old Players on a New Trajectory," *South Asian Voices*, August 3, 2017. <https://southasianvoices.org/pakistan-russia-relations-old-players-new-trajectory/>.
- Jahangir, J. "Pakistan China Defence Cooperation and Evolving International Relations", *Forman Journal of Social Sciences*, 2, (2022). DOI: 10.32368/FJSS.20220207
- Katz, M.N. "Less-Than-Great Expectations: The Pakistani-Russian Rapprochement." *Current History*, March 1, 2005.. <https://online.ucpress.edu/currenthistory/article-abstract/104/680/137/108341/Less-Than-Great-Expectations-The-Pakistani-Russian?redirectedFrom=PDF>.
- Khan, F.H. "Russia-Pakistan Strategic Relations: An Emerging Entente Cordiale." *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*, 2021.
- Khan, F.H. "Russia-Pakistan Strategic Relations: An Emerging Entente Cordiale", *Journal of Indo-Pacific Affairs*.

- <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/JIPA/Display/Article/2473361/russiapakistan-strategic-relations-an-emerging-entente-cordiale/>
- Khan, S.I. and Haider, K. "The strategic Relations of Pakistan and Russia in 21st Century." *Research Journal of Social Sciences and Economics Review* 2 (1), 2021: 259-265. [https://doi.org/10.36902/rjsser-vol2-iss1-2021\(259-265\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/rjsser-vol2-iss1-2021(259-265)).
- Kirby, P. "Why is Russia invading Ukraine and what does Putin want?" *BBC News*, February 27, 2022. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-56720589>
- Malik, O. "Pakistan–Russia Gas Stream: Opportunities and Risks of New Flagship Energy Project." RIAC, December 13, 2021. <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/columns/asian-kaleidoscope/pakistan-russia-gas-stream-opportunities-and-risks-of-new-flagship-energy-project/>.
- Martina, M. "China to speed up delivery of 50 fighter jets to Pakistan". *Reuters*, 20 May 2011. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-pakistan-idUSTRE74JOS520110520/>
- Mehmood, A. and Adil Sultan, "Impact of India's ISR Capabilities on South Asian Security Dynamics", *Strategic Studies*, 41(4), 2021. <https://issi.org.pk/impact-of-indias-isr-capabilities-on-south-asian-security-dynamics/>
- Pakistan, Russia and the New Central Asian Alliance.* (CSPR). Accessed February 1, 2022. <https://cspr.pk/pakistan-russia-and-the-new-central-asian-alliance/>.
- Rizvi, H.A. "Pakistan's Defense Policy." *Pakistan Horizon* 36 (1), 1983.
- Sakhi, N. "How Russia, China, and Iran will shape Afghanistan's future". 2021
- Salacanian, S. "How the Ukraine war is impacting Russia's arms sales to the Middle East",. *The Arab News*. 31 October 2022. <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/ukraine-war-and-russias-arms-sales-middle-east>
- Shah, A.A. "Pakistan-Russia relations: Post Cold War Era," *Strategic Studies* 21, (2), Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, 2001.
- Siddiqi, R. "Prospects for Russia-Pakistan Rapprochement." *Strategic Studies*, 37 (2), Islamabad: Institute of strategic studies Islamabad, 2017.
- Siddiqua, A. "Pakistan's defense industry: Shifting gears", *The Rusi Journal*, 146(5), (October 2001), 1-5, DOI:[10.1080/03071840108446691](https://doi.org/10.1080/03071840108446691)
- Siddiqua, A. "Political Economy of National Security", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 37(44/45), Nov. 2-15, 2002.
- Singh, B. *Pakistan and Russia Relationship: Changing Dynamics in the Post-Cold-War Era.* (MS Thesis), Bathinda: Centre for South and Central Asian Studies School of Global Relations., Central University of Punjab, 2016.
- Storey, I. "What Russia's "Turn to the East" Means for Southeast Asia." *Perspective*, December 3, 2015. https://www.iseas.edu.sg/images/pdf/ISEAS_Perspective_2015_67.pdf.
- Synovitz, R. "Regional Powers Seek to Fill Vacuum Left by West's Retreat from Afghanistan." *Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty*, December 25, 2021.

<https://www.rferl.org/a/afghanistan-power-vacuum-russia-iran-china-pakistan/31624955.html>.

Tanvir, M.H. "Pakistan and Russia: Improving Bilateral Ties & Regional Stability." *Paradigm Shift*. September 22, 2021. <https://www.paradigmshift.com.pk/pakistan-and-russia/>.

Tian, N., Lopes, D., Silva, D., Liang, X. and Lorenzo Scarazzato, "Trends In World Military Expenditure". *SIPRI Fact Sheet*. April 2024. https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/2404_fs_milex_2023.pdf

Wezeman, P.D., Kuimova, A. and Wezeman, S. T. "Trends In International Arms Transfers", *SPRI Fact Sheet*. (March 2022. https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/fs_2203_at_2021.pdf

Yaqubi, H. "Upward Trajectory in Pak-Russia Relations." *The News*, October 2, 2016, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/amp/561842-trajectory-pak-russia-relations>.