

Pak-Russia Political and Defence Relations (2010-2020): An Analysis



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Abstract: *This research paper offers a comprehensive analysis of the evolving political and defense relations between Pakistan and Russia, providing valuable insights into the complex dynamics of their strategic partnership. The strategic dialogue, initiated in 2013, has played a crucial role in fostering high-level political and military exchanges, contributing to the reset of relations between the two nations. Key milestones, including high-level visits, defense cooperation agreements, and strategic dialogues, are analyzed to provide insights into the dynamics of international politics and strategic alliances. A pivotal moment in their relationship is marked by the approval of military and technical cooperation by the Russian Security Council, indicating strategic reconciliation and a shift in dynamics. The signing of a historic defense cooperation agreement in 2014 outlines priorities such as information exchange, collaboration on international security, counterterrorism efforts, and arms control activities. The study further explores the role of the Joint Working Group on Strategic Stability and the Pakistan-Russia Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, Joint military exercises, intelligence sharing, and collaborative efforts to address regional security challenges are detailed, underscoring the significance of their cooperation in international forums and mutual contributions to the global war against terrorism.*

Keywords: strategic relations; terrorism; defence relations; military exercise; SCO

Introduction

After 9/11, the two countries met frequently and began negotiations in 2002 as part of the Joint Pakistani-Russian Working Group on Terrorism. In 2003, they started talking about strategic stability. In February 2003, President Musharraf made his first trip to Moscow since Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's visit to Russia in 1974,

which was a turning point in Pakistani-Russian relations. The two countries also signed various memorandums of understanding in the areas of investment, agriculture, energy, air communications, information cooperation, and combating terrorism (Hanif, 2013)

High-level visits, military sales, and increasing collaboration highlighted a significant

improvement in Pakistan-Russia ties in 2010. Pakistan and Russia have drastically decreased their trust deficits. Both nations exchanged visits and inked several agreements in various fields (Khan, 2021). In June 2014, Russia lifted a self-imposed arms embargo on Pakistan due to increased contacts in the defence establishment (Khan and Altaf, 2014).

The evolving political and defense relations between Pakistan and Russia from 2013 to 2018 hold critical importance in shaping global dynamics and security paradigms. The trajectory of their relationship saw significant milestones, from President Pervez Musharraf's historic visit to Moscow in 2003 to the endorsement of Pakistan's desire to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) by Vladimir Putin in 2011.

The evolution of Pakistan-Russia arms deals, starting with the lifting of the arms embargo in 2014. The sale of advanced military equipment, such as Mi-35M helicopters and Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets, showcased the depth of their defense cooperation. The strategic dialogue initiated in 2013 laid the groundwork for joint working groups on strategic stability, counter-terrorism, and strategic dialogue, emphasizing collaborative efforts to counter terrorism and promote regional peace (Dawn, 2015).

Pakistan-Russia joint military exercises, such as Druzhba-I in 2016, Druzhba-II in 2017, and Druzhba-III in 2018, Peace Mission 2018, Centre 2019, Caucasus 2020, and Aman 21 underscores the strategic advantages and shared commitment to regional peace and security, highlight the deepening ties and mutual cooperation in counterterrorism efforts.

The geopolitical landscape, marked by rapidly shifting dynamics, compelled both nations to collaborate on strategic defense. High-level exchanges and joint military initiatives, such as the Joint Russia-Pakistan Commission on Military Technical Cooperation, underscored the growing defense collaboration between Moscow and Islamabad. The Memorandum of Understanding on mutual naval cooperation and training highlighted their commitment to counterterrorism efforts and security

enhancement.

Diplomatic engagements emphasized the joint efforts to strengthen ties and address global security challenges. The convergence of interests in supporting the Afghan Taliban against the growing influence of the Islamic State further solidified their strategic collaboration (Kumar, 2019). Russia's support for Pakistan's full membership in the SCO, and subsequent admission in 2017, marked a pivotal moment in their diplomatic ties. The SCO provided a platform for both nations to address economic and security concerns, emphasizing teamwork in resolving regional challenges (Imran et al, 2019).

Strategic Relations

Pakistan established ties with the Soviet Union while taking into account either the Americans or its hostile neighbours. As a result, Pakistan and Russia do not have a bilateral issue; rather, they have common interests or focus on regional and global political paradigms (Hanif, 2013). Russia is planning for a greater Eurasia after the collapse of the USSR, but this will only be possible if the East is strengthened and stabilized. For the stability and security of Afghanistan, Russia is meeting with Pakistan, China, and Iran. Russia's leadership of regional security-related meetings in South Asia reflects its growing focus on the region and readiness to take the position of the US. However, Russia is aware that it requires the support of Pakistan and China in South Asia to effectively pursue any agenda (Bashir and Nasser, 2018).

When the Russian Security Council approved military and technical cooperation with Pakistan for the dual purpose goods, it was the first indication of their strategic reconciliation. This was premised, in particular, on the requirement of maintaining the fragile relations between India and Russia (Kaushik, 2019). Pakistan joined the US lead War on Terror after 9/11 against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, and the rapprochement between Russia and Pakistan effectively began. Pakistan was first inspired to diversify its foreign policy when the administration of Bush threatened to send the nation back to the Stone Age if Pakistan did not

support the American war in Afghanistan (Naqvi and Masood, n.d.). In 2003, President Pervez Musharraf made a historic trip to Moscow and began establishing formal frameworks to strengthen Pakistan's bilateral ties with Russia. In 2007, When Mikhail Fradkov Prime Minister of Russia visited Pakistan and held extensive talks on the countries' relationships, the bilateral ties took a new direction (Abbas, 2016). Vladimir Putin, however, publicly backed and proclaimed a significant shift in Russia's views toward Pakistan upon its desire to join the SCO in 2011, realizing the latter's significance as a partner in South Asia (Naqvi and Masood, n.d.).

Pakistan's Foreign Minister visited Moscow in February 2012; Russia's Foreign Minister returned to Pakistan in October 2012; in August and October 2012, respectively, the Air Chief and Army Chief of Pakistan visited Russia; President Putin's trip to Islamabad in October 2012 was not materialized due to the unfavourable security circumstances at the time; and the Air Force Chief and Army Chief of Russia visited Islamabad. The Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism's summit in Islamabad in January 2014, and Pakistan's defence Minister's trip to Moscow to attend an international conference are among the significant visits in May 2014. During his stay, he met with representatives from Russia. There were also exchanges of technical and parliamentary delegations. Russian and Pakistani top officials were able to communicate with each other thanks to Pakistan's involvement as an observer in the SCO (Rizvi, 2014). Pakistan offers condolences for the deaths in a helicopter crash that occurred on October 21, 2016, in Russia's Yamal Peninsula in Siberia, in which 19 lost their valuable lives and others were injured (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2016).

The first session of the bilateral strategic dialogue between Pakistan and Russia, which was started at the level of foreign secretary and aimed to find a multidimensional relationship spanning energy, trade, and defence, took place in August 2013. Ten rounds of discussions were held in the meantime as part of the Russia-

Pakistan dialogue on strategic stability, which addresses problems linked to non-proliferation, arms control, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and enhancing global and regional security (Saddiqi, 2017). A new chapter in the historically hostile bilateral relations between Moscow and Islamabad began with the opening of the strategic dialogue in 2013. The institutional basis for mending the relationship was afterwards said to have been supplied by the strategic conversation (Syed, 2014). Former Pakistani Foreign Secretary and delegation leader Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani believes the dialogue was important for the development of convergences on a variety of local issues (Khan, 2022).

In 2013, Pakistan's Chief of Naval Staff visited Moscow and the Russian Air Force Chief visited Pakistan, the possibility of navy and air force cooperation was also investigated. In October 2013, Pakistan Naval Ship (PNS) ASLAT made its first trip to Russia. The Russian Pacific Fleet also visited Pakistan from April 19 through April 23, 2014. In May 2014, the PNS Rah Naward also made port calls to Russia. Two military exercises between the two countries have already taken place, the first in Russia and the second in Pakistan. The increased interest in defence and security concerns is reflected in the frequency of interactions between military branches. It is regarded as a soft Russian stance toward Pakistan due to military cooperation and the removal of the ban on selling weaponry to Pakistan in June 2014 (Naqvi and Masood, n.d.).

President Putin has repeatedly emphasized that while having close relations with Pakistan, Russia does not develop a formal military alliance with Pakistan because of its close ties with India. Thus, it was evident that Russia was both reluctant and eager to move forward with developing a strategic relationship with Pakistan. The Indo-U.S. civil nuclear agreement, however, made 2014 a pivotal year for the region. When he referred to Pakistan as a zipper of Pan Eurasian Integration in 2015, Andrew Korybko highlighted Islamabad's crucial role in the impending regional dynamics (Dawn, 2014).

On November 20, 2014, Russia and Pakistan signed a historic agreement for military

cooperation with the intention to promote stability and peace in the region (Dawn, 2014). The signing of the defence cooperation agreement was the first significant indicator of the shifting dynamics between the two nations. The comprehensive agreement mandated information sharing on military and political matters, collaboration to improve global security, stepped-up counterterrorism, and arms control efforts, increased cooperation in a number of military disciplines, and experience sharing for peacekeeping missions (Kumar, 2019). To enhance their defense cooperation was the main topic of conversation between the two Ministers in November 2014 (Express Tribune, 2014).

The Agreement established the following strategic priorities:

- Information exchange on military and political issues
- Collaboration to advance international security
- To Strengthen counterterrorism efforts and arms control activities
- To Strengthen military cooperation in various fields

Sharing of lessons learned from peacekeeping operations (Qazi and Bashir, 2022).

Russia and Pakistan signed a military cooperation agreement which was a milestone. The Russian Defense Minister praised the Pakistani Army's abilities and experience in the battle against terrorism. The Prime Minister requested Russian support in Pakistan's application for full membership in the SCO. The visits allow both nations to work jointly to provide stability and peace in the region in addition to advancing bilateral defence relations (Express Tribune, 2014). It denotes a significant policy change. The three mutual forums, the Joint Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism, Working Group on Strategic Stability, and Bilateral Strategic Dialogue have provided prospects to talk about problems relating to regional security, including disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control among several other topics of shared interest. Although there is still a long way to go in terms of conventional

weapons, stopping an arms race in space, and the instability of anti-ballistic missile systems (ABM), trends are influencing future chances for collaboration (Naqvi and Masood, n.d, 36).

In 2002, Musharraf visited Russia, which resulted in the formalization of the relationship. Along with an Inter-governmental Joint Commission, other Joint Working Groups on topics including Counter-Terrorism and Strategic Stability were established (Khan, 2014).

Joint Working Group on Strategic Stability

A high-level meeting of Russia-Pakistan on strategic stability was started in 2003. The consultative group meets every year alternately in Moscow and Islamabad.

In January 2003, the first session of the Pakistan and Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability took place in Moscow (Dawn, 2003). The discussion offered a significant forum for exchanging opinions on topics affecting strategic stability, particularly concerning critical regional challenges as well as arms control and disarmament issues. The need to maintain a multilateral approach in addressing the current security concerns was acknowledged by both nations. They reaffirmed the importance of the UN charter in settling all conflicts and disagreements (Dawn, 2003).

The Pakistan-Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability held its sixth meeting in Islamabad. Munawar Saeed Bhatti, the country's additional foreign secretary, served as the delegation's leader. The Moscow delegation was led by Sergey A. Ryabkov, a Deputy Foreign Minister. The two sides discussed the developments in terms of global and regional security, particularly nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and weapons control. Additionally, both parties addressed to work mutually in the fields of research, energy, technology, security, and multidimensional forums. The two sides reiterated their commitment to advance comprehensive cooperation between Pakistan and Russia by strengthening their ties and taking practical efforts in that direction (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2011).

On 25 April 2013, Islamabad hosted the 8th summit of the Pakistan-Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability. Mr Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Pakistan's Additional Foreign Secretary, led the Pakistani delegation. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Sergey A. Ryabkov, led the Russia delegation. The two sides discussed the advancements in international disarmament, weapons control, and WMD non-proliferation. The preservation of strategic and regional stability, as well as pertinent areas of mutual and multidimensional collaboration, was also discussed by the two parties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2013).

It was on January 14, 2015, Russia held the Pak-Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability the 9th meeting. In this meeting, Tasnim Aslam, Additional Foreign Secretary, headed Pakistan's delegation, and Sergey A. Ryabkov, Deputy Foreign Minister, headed the Russian delegation (Dawn, 2015).

In April 2016, the 10th meeting of the Pakistan-Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Pakistan (Hilal, n.d.). Both the Russian and Pakistani delegations were led by their respective countries' Deputy Foreign Ministers, Mr Sergey Ryabkov of the Russia and Ms Tasnim Aslam of the Pakistani Foreign Office (United Nations & Economic Coordination, n.d.). In a friendly setting, both sides had open discussions about non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control issues. They also agreed that it was important to establish regional and global environments that provided all nations with unequal and undiminished security. Both parties, among other things, agreed to strengthen bilateral coordination in global fora and build on shared interests to foster commonly advantageous mutual cooperation, keeping with the upward trend in broader bilateral relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2016).

On 2 March 2018, the 12th session of the Pakistan-Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability took place, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Pakistan. While Ambassador Tasnim Aslam led the Pakistani delegation,

Ryabkov led the Russian delegation (United Nations & Economic Coordination, n.d.). In-depth discussions on regional and global trends, especially those pertaining to disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control, took place between the two parties. The discussions were distinguished by a commonality of approach and consensus on a variety of topical topics against the backdrop of a rapidly changing strategic landscape. The close coordination, cooperation, and talks between the two sides at various international fora were met with a high degree of satisfaction. Both sides agreed that it was important to build on the favourable trend of their overall bilateral relations by looking into opportunities for productive cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2018).

The 13th session of the Pakistan-Russia Consultative Group on Strategic Stability took place in Moscow under the leadership of Mr. Sergey Ryabkov, and foreign secretary Tehmina Janjua. The two sides discussed the state of non-proliferation, international arms control, and disarmament, as well as the regional and global security environments. The two parties shared concerns about the potential erosion of laboriously negotiated international agreements in a number of sectors and agreed that multilateralism must be preserved in the areas of disarmament and international security. The discussions included topics such as the non-militarization of space, preserving mutual and multilateral agreements, advancements in the field of communications and information in relation to global security, and the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. The tight coordination, collaboration, and talks between Russia and Pakistan at numerous international fora were highlighted with satisfaction by the two sides. By looking into opportunities for mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation, both parties agreed that it was essential to continue the positive trend of their overall mutual relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2019).

The Joint Working Group on Strategic Stability between Russia and Pakistan has been an important forum for high-level talks on regional

security issues since it started in 2003. They meet annually in Moscow and Islamabad to discuss critical challenges, arms control, and disarmament. Both countries emphasize a multilateral approach and value the UN Charter in resolving conflicts. The meetings cover various topics, including nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. They are committed to strengthening cooperation and have open discussions, leading to increased coordination in global forums. They also address emerging challenges like non-militarization of space and technology-related security concerns. Overall, their collaboration aims to promote mutual understanding and positive bilateral cooperation for regional stability.

Pakistan-Russia Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism

Since 9/11, terrorism and extremism have negatively impacted regional and national politics, becoming a worldwide threat. The issue of terrorism is yet another that needs to be seriously addressed (Khan, 2019,). Islamabad and Moscow have a lot of room to enhance their collaboration in the area of counterterrorism to combat the growing threat of violent radicalization. In order to promote regional security, both nations have created a bilateral joint working group on counterterrorism (Khan, 2019,).

In 2004, the Foreign Office hosted the second meeting of the Pakistan-Russia Joint Working Group on Terrorism, where a 13-member delegation of the Russian Federation, headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly Safonov, began two days of discussions with Pakistani officials on strategic security and counterterrorism issues. The Joint Working Group's second session focused on issues affecting regional stability. Within the context of the war against terrorism, drug control, and religious extremism, the two parties exchanged views on a number of topics of common interest, including the state of Pakistan-India relations and the situations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Pakistan emphasized the importance of maintaining South Asia's strategic stability (Dawn, 2004).

President Asif Ali Zardari has vehemently denounced the terrorist assault in Moscow that resulted in the deaths and injuries of numerous uninvolved parties. Nothing, he claimed, could ever justify attacks by terrorists on innocent people. The people of Pakistan showed unwavering support for the Russian people and felt their suffering (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2011). The terrorist assault in Moscow, which claimed many valuable lives and injured a considerable number of people, has been severely condemned by Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The people and government of Pakistan express their unwavering support for the citizens and authorities of Russia. He also highlights how crucial it is for the world community to pool resources and work together to counter terrorism (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2011).

Russia places a high value on Pakistan's role as a significant participant in counterterrorism cooperation. One of the important nations in the war against terrorism is Pakistan. Russia naturally places a high value on collaboration with Pakistan in this area (Dawn, 2016). At the same time, President Putin supports Pakistan's stance in the fight against terrorism and accepts joint regional initiatives for eradicating extremism. President Putin signalled his willingness to sell Russia's cutting-edge military equipment to Pakistan in the wake of the 2016 Quetta bombing of the Police Training College. He also promised assistance to Pakistan in battling terrorism. Moscow, in contrast to Washington, which generally views Pakistan with suspicion and accuses it of providing safe havens for the Afghan Taliban, has recognized the Pakistani Army's accomplishments in bringing about regional stability. In Cherat in September 2016, Pakistani and Russian Special Operations Forces participated in a combined counterterrorism drill called Druzhba (Friendship), despite New Delhi's protests. It was the first-ever military drill to combat terrorism.

Two-week-long joint military exercises from October 22 to November 4, 2018, were held in the Nowshera district of Pakistan to improve

military ties (Khan, 2019).

Extremism and violent terrorism pose a threat to Russia's and Pakistan's national security. Both nations worked together to tackle this menace because they have both suffered greatly at the hands of terrorism. Russia and Pakistan devise cooperative methods for exchanging intelligence and working together. They create an anti-terrorism superpower alliance, as Andrew Korybko said in a response to the Druzhba 2017 Mutual Military Exercise: Together and in light of threats and difficulties, Russia and Pakistan's cooperative military cooperation turn the two nations into anti-terrorist superpowers and significantly strengthen Eurasian security. A cooperative working group on counterterrorism that was established by Pakistan and Russia held yearly meetings. Russia and Pakistan both have experience fighting terrorism, and they would both significantly benefit from sharing this knowledge. This action significantly bolsters regional counterterrorism operations and supports global counterterrorism efforts (Khan, 2019, 97).

On January 27, 2014, the fifth session of the Pakistan-Russia Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism was held in Pakistan. The delegation from Pakistan was led by Mr Imtiaz Tajwar, the acting secretary. The head of the Russian delegation was Alexander V. Zmeyerovskiy, who was a Special Representative of the President for International Cooperation in the War against Terrorism and International Crime. The two parties discussed regional and domestic dangers and practical measures to address them. The two sides also discussed working together to stop the trafficking of illegal substances, stop money laundering, and fight organized crime. Also examined was cooperation on pertinent problems in regional and international fora. To successfully combat threats to national and regional security, both parties decided to increase bilateral collaboration and information exchange (Ministry of Interior, n.d).

Five parliamentary delegations from Russia, Iran, Turkey, China, and Afghanistan arrived in Islamabad in December 2017 and they took part

in a three-day conference organized by the National Assembly secretariat to develop a coordinated strategy to combat terrorism, improve connectivity, and foster better relations between nations (Dawn, 2017).

The Pakistan-Russia Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism had its 7th session in March 2018 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad. The two sides talked on a wide range of topics, including the regional and global state of counterterrorism, the steps taken by both nations to combat the threat of terrorism, as well as mutual cooperation on the subject. There was a broad consensus that terrorism was a common global issue that needed the international community to work jointly to effectively eradicate it. Russians were extremely grateful for Pakistan's help in the global war against terrorism. Concern over the growing threat posed by Da'esh was acknowledged by both parties. In order to counter this threat, it was important for the region's nations to work together. The two sides reaffirmed their dedication to advancing bilateral cooperation in terrorist prevention. Additionally, they decided to work together to oppose terrorism in the UN and other international forums (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2018).

The continuous bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the two nations, including cooperation at the United Nations and the SCO, has been praised during the 8th Session of the Russia-Pakistan Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism held in Moscow. Both parties assessed domestic and international terrorism risks and discussed a wide range of counterterrorism-related topics during the discussion (Ghuri, 2019).

Sergei Lavrov, the foreign Minister of Russia, stated that Russia will continue to assist Pakistan to strengthen its counterterrorism capabilities, and the two countries will also form a commission for military cooperation, which is in the interests of the entire area. Lavrov stated that the battle against terrorism was a first priority for Pakistan-Russia economic collaboration, but his nation also saw additional prospects for mutual economic and trade cooperation with Pakistan, particularly in the energy sector. The foreign

Minister stated that Pakistan and Russia continue to hold joint military drills Druzhba (Friendship) while noting that the two nations will establish a commission on military cooperation (Dawn, 2018).

Russia and Pakistan have been actively collaborating on counterterrorism efforts since the post-9/11 era. Both nations recognize the seriousness of the terrorism threat and the need to address it together. They have established a Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism to enhance their cooperation in tackling extremism and violent radicalization. Over the years, they have held multiple meetings, military drills, and joint exercises to exchange intelligence, combat organized crime, and enhance regional security. Both countries value each other's contributions to the global war against terrorism and have expressed their commitment to continued cooperation in various international fora.

Pakistan-Russia Bilateral Strategic Dialogue

The relations have a history of hostility, enter a new phase as a result of the strategic dialogue. There has been a quiet rapprochement between Pakistan and Russia. The high-level political and military exchanges have effectively aided the two nations in their efforts to reset their relations. The international events that both countries share policy convergences on various subjects fueling the Pakistan-Russia rapprochement. The fact that the rapprochement is focused on strengthening defence ties between the two nations is also significant (Dawn, 2013).

On August 28, 2013, the Russian Federation and Pakistan had their first-ever consultations at the level of foreign secretaries in Moscow. Vladimir Gennadievich Titov Deputy Minister of the Russian Foreign Office led the Russian side, while Foreign Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani represented Pakistan. Alamgir Babur, Pakistan's ambassador to the Russian Federation, and Igor Morgulov, Russia's deputy foreign Minister, also took part in the consultations. The expanding understanding between the two nations was noted with satisfaction by both parties, who discussed the status of their bilateral relations. This reaffirmed their commitment to advance the bilateral relationship's depth and

variety for their mutual benefit. Additionally, both parties discussed enhancing investment and trade connections, collaboration in the area of power generation and energy, and regional and global challenges (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2013).

The second round of the mutual strategic dialogue between Russia and Pakistan was held in Pakistan. Discussions with Mr Nadeem Riyaz, Additional Secretary (Europe), centred on an analysis of parliamentary, political, economic, and cultural connections. Additionally, ways to improve collaboration across diverse industries were investigated, and an extensive discussion on the whole range of bilateral problems as well as the situation in the region. Both parties expressed their determination to take specific actions to further their cooperation, particularly in the economic domain, in order to further cement their already relations (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2014). The two parties also agreed to increase their cooperation in the energy industry (Syed, 2014).

Pakistan-Russia Joint Military Exercise

An essential component of Pakistan's defence diplomacy, military training, and exercises aims to assess the capabilities of the Pakistani army and pick up new skills from the Russian military. The joint exercises give both militaries the chance to advance their mutual understanding of one another's cultures, shift their respective military personnel's competing mentality from adversarial to cooperative, and create deeper cultural understanding (Qazi and Bashir, 2022).

Russia and Pakistan have been participating in bilateral and international joint military exercises. The naval drills during the 2014 and 2015 Arabian Monsoon, were followed by mutual military drills in 2016 and 2017. The largest anti-submarine vessel in the Russian Navy, the Severmorsk, participated in the 2017 multinational joint Naval AMAN exercise in Karachi, which supported the trend toward convergence. In the Druzhba-2017 military exercise more than 100 members of Russia's mountain infantry division and more than 70 Pakistani mountaineers participated in the

Southern Military District, which was held in September 2017 on a mountain training range close to the Nizhny Arkhyz settlement in Karachay-Cherkessia (Khan, 2019).

The combined military exercise is considered a further development of military-to-military collaboration, reflecting a steady improvement in bilateral relationships between the two nations (The Express Tribune, September 2016). The countries decided to create a Joint Military Commission at the start of 2018. After the Joint Military Consultative Committee (JMCC) between Pakistan and Russia held its first meeting, the two countries inked a Security Training Agreement that permitted the Pakistani military to receive training from Russian military institutions (Khan, 2019).

Visit of Army's Commander-in-Chief Raheel Sharif to Russia

Army Chief Raheel Sharif visited Russia in June 2015 as part of Pakistan's efforts to normalize ties with Russia. Naryshkin praised Pakistan for its efforts to maintain peace in the region. An official from Russia lauded Pakistan's accomplishments in the ongoing military operation known as Zarb-e-Azb. Naryshkin informed Gen. Raheel Sharif that our relationships are autonomous, more dependable, and will grow farther. The growing relations between India and the US have forced Moscow to develop its relations with Islamabad (The Express Tribune, June 2015). His visit is also considered a component of Pakistan's proactive diplomacy, which was started in the wake of regional realignments to engage with neighbouring nations. As a result relations between Moscow and Islamabad have improved (Yousuf, 2015).

Arabian Monsoon 2015

The Arabian Monsoon was a joint anti-drug military exercise between Pakistan and Russia held in the northern Arabian Sea in December 2015. Russian Navy ship arrived at Karachi Port in December 2015, under Vice Admiral Kulakov. Pakistan welcomed a Russian Navy ship that Senior Pakistan Navy officers meet with the ship's commanding officer Admiral Kulakov and discuss the significance of the issues for

both countries. Naval personnel exchange visits and friendly sporting events are also planned. The ship participated in the joint anti-drug exercise Arabian Monsoon-2015. During the Russian naval ship's visit and during the discussion both countries agreed to strengthen maritime cooperation and promote stability and peace in the region (The Express Tribune, December 2015). The exercise involved personnel from the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency, Naval Special Ops Forces, and Pakistan Navy (PN) personnel, including the PN Ship Khaibar and the Russian Ship Kulakov. Additional observers from the Pakistan Anti-Narcotics Force ANF and the Russian Federal Drug Control Service. The Pakistan Navy has done a number of actions to advance peace and stability while also aggressively pursuing government agendas. The Pakistan Navy participated in international initiatives to combat marine crimes in the region in order to maintain the maritime environment necessary for the global economy and energy security (Daily Times, December 2015).

Pakistan-Russia Joint Military Exercise Druzhba-I 2016

Oleg Salyukov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian Army, announced seven foreign drills, including the first-ever Russian-Pakistani special drills Druzhba-I (Dawn, January 23, 2016). The Russian troops arrived in Pakistan for a mutual military drill which was held from 24 September to 10 October 2016. In 2016, Russia and Pakistan conducted joint military exercises called Druzhba-2016, a Russian word that means friendship. This was for the first time the two countries conducted a combined military exercise, and it move in the right direction towards improving the relationship. This exercise Druzhba, known as "Friendship 2016," which will involve about 200 military troops, is a component of the military collaboration agreement concluded in December 2014 between Russia and Pakistan, which was regarded as a pivotal moment in the mutual relations between the two nations. The Druzhba provides an opportunity for Russia to build a new arms sales market by taking advantage of Pakistan's expanding security demands (Yousaf,

September 2016). The conduct of these drills between Pakistan and Russia was not anticipated by the Indians. The Pakistani armed forces, who were involved in the eradication of terrorism, have also attracted the attention of Russia. Since Russia has continued to suffer from insurgency, military-to-military cooperation in counterterrorism efforts is crucial for Russia. These two states had three bilateral military cooperation agreements up till 2018 (Khan, 2019).

Pakistan-Russia Joint Military Exercise Druzhba-II 2017

Druzhba-II 2017, a two-week joint training exercise between Pakistani and Russian Special Forces, was held in Minralney Vody, Russia (Gul, 2018). During the drill statement made by Inter-Services Public Relations ISPR, senior military officials from both countries' Special Forces attended the inaugural ceremony. The joint drill concentrated on hostage rescue, hostage counterterrorism operations, and cordon and search operations. The joint training improved and further solidifies the two nations' military ties and share Pakistan's Army expertise in the war against terrorism (International the News, September 2017).

Pakistan-Russia in International Naval Exercise Aman-2017

The international naval exercise Aman-17, which took place in the Arabian Sea off the coast of Karachi from February 10 to 14, 2017, attracted participants from over 35 nations. The navies of 12 nations, including Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Russia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States, carried out the joint drill, with observers from 31 other nations. Since 2007, Pakistan has held the Aman naval drills. The exercises are intended to show off the capacity of the allies to combat terrorism and other maritime dangers, as well as to provide participants with a chance to develop their skills and foster friendships and cohesion in order to further peace and stability (Dawn, February 2017).

Pakistan-Russia Joint Military Exercise Druzhba-III 2018

In October 2018, the third yearly joint exercise known as Druzhba (Friendship)-III took place between Russian and Pakistani forces. The National Counter-Terrorist Centre in Pabbi hosted the drills, in which a 70-person Russian military contingent took part. The bilateral exercise improved military cooperation between the two nations and the exchange of expert knowledge, notably in the area of counterterrorism. To further regional peace and security, it is intended to improve relations between the two militaries and encourage experience sharing, particularly in the field of counterterrorism (Dawn, October 2018).

Druzhba-III 2018 drills included minor tactics, weapon training, and firing skills including fire and manoeuvre, mountain warfare, reconnaissance operations, casualty evacuation, helicopter rappelling, buildup area clearance, fighting in built-up areas, and air assault techniques (Iqbal, n.d). The exercises have significant political and strategic advantages. The drills strengthened Pakistan's defence diplomatic efforts to persuade Russian Federation to change its support for Indian an unbalanced foreign policy in the region. This was made clear by Russia's choice to carry out the 2016 and 2017 Friendship exercises despite India's worries. In addition, since 2018, the forces of the two countries have engaged in three multinational training drills under the umbrellas of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's.

Peace Mission 2018, Centre 2019, Caucasus 2020, and Aman 21. The drills, which were held in Russia, were aimed at reducing the threat posed by international terrorism (Qazi and Bashir, 2022,).

Russia's Tsentr-2019 (Center-2019) Military Drills

Pakistan and four Central Asian republics participated in combined anti-terrorism exercises with Russia, China, and India. For the Tsentr-2019 (Center-2019) drills, around 600 aircraft, 20,000 pieces of equipment, 130,000 soldiers, and up to 15 vessels were deployed throughout eight Russian training sites (Kremlin, 2019).

Pakistan-Russia Joint Military Consultative

Committee (JMCC)

The Pakistan-Russia Joint Military Consultative Committee JMCC was founded in 2018. Under JMCC regular military consultations between Russian and Pakistani military officials are held and they discuss military cooperation and reflect on the Middle East conflict, counterterrorism efforts, and Afghanistan's peace process. The JMCC provided a platform for defence cooperation between the two countries and is typically co-chaired by Pakistan's defence secretary and Russia's deputy defence Minister. A significant Treaty was concluded during the inaugural meeting of JMCC on August 8th, 2018 in Rawalpindi Pakistan (Qazi and Bashir, 2022).

The agreement permitted Pakistani soldiers to get military training in Russian military institutes. The Joint Military Consultative Committee (JMCC), which the defence ministry refers to be the highest platform for defence cooperation between Pakistan and the Russian Federation, held its inaugural meeting at the conclusion of which the agreement was signed. The two nations also agreed to establish a commission to improve military cooperation during the visit to Russian Federation Khawaja Asif the foreign Minister. During the discussions, the parties reviewed the advancements made in their bilateral defence cooperation since they signed the defence cooperation deal in November 2014. Army chief Fomin, in the meantime, visited General Headquarters on the invitation of the Chief of Army staff Qamar Javed Bajwa. The regional security situation, and areas of mutual concern, including strengthening bilateral defence and security cooperation, were the topics of their conversation (Syed, 2018).

At the first session of the Pakistan-Russian Military Consultative Committee on Security and Defense Issues, in which Fomin participated, the parties decided to expand their collaboration, according to the defence ministry. Colonel-General Fomin met with Pakistan's military and political leadership several times while there. The parties discussed their views on regional security as well as the status and future of their mutual military and military-technical cooperation; cooperation in the area of military

education received particular focus (The, News, August 2018). The deal came amid Islamabad's deteriorating relations with Washington (Khan, 2022).

It led to the suspension of all US military training for Pakistani officers due to disagreements about the fight in Afghanistan. A Pakistani defence analyst claims that training Pakistani military personnel at Russian military schools would cause a significant shift in the worldview of senior military leaders who had previously received their training at US institutions. While Pakistan would not do so in agreements with China. Russia and Pakistan are not as upfront about the nature of their collaboration. Nevertheless, the trajectory is pretty obvious. After US military assistance stopped under the Trump administration, Islamabad is keeping its options with Russia and China open (Khan, 2021). An MoU for naval cooperation has also signed between the two countries in July 2018 (Malik, 2018).

In 2019, the Joint Military Consultative Committee (JMCC) between Russia and Pakistan had its second session in Moscow. During this time, both sides discussed their mutual relations and expressed pleasure with their shared understanding of important global concerns. The JMCC is Pakistan and Russia's highest level of military cooperation (The Express Tribune, August 20, 2019)

Regional and Global Security

The relationship between Pakistan and Russia is multifaceted rather than one-dimensional. It not only promoted the national interests of Russia and Pakistan, but it also promote regional stability and global stability (Marwat, 2020). On April 3, 2013, in Beijing, China, Russia, and Pakistan conducted a trilateral discussion on Afghanistan. The three parties discussed the issue of Afghanistan and regional and international cooperation in Afghanistan. The three parties agreed that the security and stability of the region are affected by the evolving situation in Afghanistan. The dialogue between China, Russia, and Pakistan close neighbours of Afghanistan on this problem aids in fostering mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation

between the three parties. The three sides pledged to work jointly to protect the Afghan-led, Afghan-owned reconciliation process as well as the security, stability, and peace of Afghanistan and the region. The three parties also agreed and they discussed increasing counterterrorism and anti-drug cooperation within the framework of the Istanbul Process, as well as supporting the SCO in its efforts to play an important role in the Afghanistan crisis (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2013).

Pakistan is one of the key regional players and has an important strategic location, and has greater force to advance and promote regional development. Russia and Pakistan have common interests that should be investigated and upheld through mutual collaboration. Both states took the initiative to develop a solid relationship. Additionally both the states took some steps for the establishment of stability and peace in Afghanistan and other Central Asian nations. Pakistan and Russia struggled to finish the fighting in Afghanistan and restore peace and stability in the area. The closeness provided an opportunity for both countries to employ balanced strategies to invest in other areas like education, health, and social welfare, Russians have a great deal of experience in it (Yaqubi, 2016).

On December 13, 2016, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the inaugural Pakistan-Russia Consultations on Regional Issues was held. The Pakistani side was led by Mr Ahmad Hussain Dayo, Director General (West Asia), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the Russian side was led by Alexander V. Sternik, Head of the Third CIS Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Consultations covered the full spectrum of regional concerns as well as the major areas of shared interest, such as connectivity and economic cooperation. Additionally, the two sides discussed significant regional and international developments (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2016).

On the sidelines of the UNGA meeting in New York in September 2017, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Foreign Minister

Khawaja Asif met. The two leaders spoke about their joint efforts to strengthen ties between Pakistan and Russia as well as the present security situation in the world and region. They also discussed in-depth the actions being done to advance peace and stability in Afghanistan. Khawaja Asif was invited by Foreign Minister Lavrov to visit Moscow for talks aimed at strengthening their cooperation and exchanging viewpoints on regional and global issues (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2017).

Geopolitical dynamics that are rapidly shifting have forced the two countries to collaborate on strategic defence. Defence collaboration between Moscow and Islamabad has grown significantly and is characterized by regular high-level exchanges between the two nations. High-level discussions between the military top brass of the two nations' armed forces included:

- In April 2018, the Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Moscow.
- In August 2018, the Joint Chief of Staff Committee's Chairman visits Moscow to take part in the Army Games' at the closing ceremony and the Joint Shanghai Cooperation Organization military drills "Peace Mission 2018."
- The delegation led by Mr Alexei Frolkin, the deputy director of the Russian Federation's Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation, visited Pakistan in March 2018 for the 1st Session of the Joint Russia-Pakistan Commission on Military Technical Cooperation.
- The Vice Chief of Naval Staff's trip to St. Petersburg in July 2018 with the Pakistan Navy Ship Aslat to take part in the Naval Parade,
- Colonel General Alexander Fomin, the deputy Minister for the defence of Russia, visited in August 2018.

Both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding mutual naval cooperation and the training of Pakistani military personnel in the Russian Federation (Awan, 2022).

In February 2018, the foreign Minister Khwaja

Asif visited Moscow. Russia and Pakistan are willing to work together to advance stability and peace throughout the region and beyond. Even though Mr Lavrov and Mr Asif had discussions on various topics, including trade, energy, and economic cooperation as well as people-to-people contacts in addition to defence cooperation, both discussed the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan and the Islamic State's growing threat there. Russia has been very concerned about the threat of IS and drugs coming from war-terror Afghanistan (Syed, 2018).

Pakistan changed its diplomatic goals due to India leaning towards the US. Being a regional power, Russia contributed more effectively to maintaining peace in the area. Russia and Pakistan being on the same page allowed them to play a more assertive role in regional geopolitics. In Afghanistan, there has been a small but significant convergence that is paving the road for deeper links between the two nations. An essential component of maintaining global security and regional stability is the growth of positive relations between Russia and Pakistan Y. Khan (personal communication, January 22, 2023).

Russian and Pakistani interests appear to have converged in support of the Afghan Taliban, another crucial strategic sector. Russian assistance to the Taliban in their fight against the IS is being driven by concerns over the IS's expanding influence in Afghanistan and its ability to disrupt the CARs. In an effort to resolve the conflicts between the Taliban and the Afghan government, Russia is also discovered to be aiding the peace process in Afghanistan. In November 2018, Moscow served as the venue for negotiations between the Taliban and the Afghan High Peace Council (Kumar, 2019).

In March 2018 high-level meeting between Pakistan and Russia was held, and the two countries recognized the need for joint efforts for peace, security, and stability in the region. A valuable forum a variety of subjects were discussed by Pakistan's and Russia's top security officials. Both parties expressed satisfaction with the existing state of cooperation in this area as they talked about

defence and security relations. The foreign secretary wanted more detail on Pakistan's ongoing counterterrorism measures and improving security situation. The discussions were notable for the two sides' convergence of opinion on a number of regional and global problems of shared importance (Babar, 2018).

Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was initially founded in 1996 as the Shanghai Five Group, which includes China, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan, to resolve border disputes and begin confidence-building measures. In 1996, an agreement was reached on the consolidation of mutual trust in military operations in border regions. This is expressly stated in the Agreement on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces in Border Areas since 1997. The Shanghai Five committed to stepping up their collaboration in the fight against racial secession, international terrorism, religious extremism, arms trafficking, drug trafficking, and other transnational criminal activities in the 1998 Almaty Declaration. In 2004, a Secretariat and a Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure were established, and in 2001, with the addition of Uzbekistan, the Shanghai Five became the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Iran, India, and Pakistan were permitted to join the organization as observers in 2005 (Norling and Swanstro, 2007).

Russia is concentrated on exploiting the SCO to achieve certain goals. Due to this Russia concentrated on getting Pakistan full SCO membership. Similarly, Lavorv expressed that both India and Pakistan should participate actively in Afghanistan's discussion globally, Russia made similar justifications about Pakistan as it joined in May 2012. Moscow hopes to sell defence equipment to Pakistan. To handle Muslim rebels domestically, Russia seeks Pakistan's cooperation. Russia is putting a lot of emphasis on taking the lead in all fields of influence in both the neighbouring countries and the South Asian region. Checking the USA's influence in this region is a further consideration (Imran et al, 2019).

In December 2014, there was a roundtable

discussion on “The Expansion of SCO: Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan”. Peace and Diplomatic Studies Institute organized the event, which aimed to develop opinions and viewpoints about the potential enlargement of the SCO as well as the opportunities and problems that would present themselves for the new member nations. Russian Ambassador Alexey Yurievich Dedov stated that his country has consistently backed Pakistan’s permanent membership in the SCO. He emphasized the value of teamwork in addressing the economic and security concerns that the SCO member nations are confronting (The Express Tribune, December 2014).

Additionally, Russia strongly supported Pakistan to become a full member of the SCO. After signing MoUs in Tashkent later in June 2015, Pakistan joined the SCO as a full member. At the SCO Heads of State Summit in Tashkent, the memorandum was signed by Sartaj Aziz, the foreign policy advisor to Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (Shah, et, al, 2020). The Heads of Government Council Meeting of the SCO took place on December 14 and 15, 2015, in Zhengzhou, China, under the direction of Premier Nawaz Sharif (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2015). The Heads of States Council HSC is the SCO’s highest body for making decisions. Pakistan has made major contributions to regional growth, stability, and security as a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2015).

Russia’s support also highlighted the country’s growing perception as an important player in the region’s effort to combat terrorism. At the summit held in Astana on June 9, 2017, Pakistan was formally admitted into the SCO (Kumar, 2019). Since India and Pakistan became full members of SCO in 2017, there have been yearly meetings in Astana, Kazakhstan 2017, Qingdao, China 2018, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 2019, and Chelyabinsk, Russia 2020. Pakistan’s entry into the SCO group signalled a significant turning point for two main reasons. Due to membership, Pakistan was first allowed convergence to move despite India’s unethical

diplomatic attempts to isolate Pakistan. India, for its part, claims that Pakistan is the root of all the problems that the SCO is attempting to resolve. Pakistan accuses India of the same things that India does. Second, the SCO gives Pakistan a venue to stop India from abusing the forum to Islamabad’s detriment or to confront India when necessary. SCO given Pakistan and India’s propensity to include their interstate, cross-border disputes, which might potentially divert attention from the organization’s main goals and agenda, Russia had grudgingly agreed to their membership (Khan, 2021).

On the sidelines of the 2018 Qingdao Summit of the SCO Council of Heads of State, President Mamnoon Hussain of Pakistan and Russian President Vladimir Putin met. The Leaders spoke about bilateral, current regional, and international issues as well as other topics of mutual interest. Both leaders concurred that the bond between them had grown. The potential for improved future collaboration was highlighted in the areas of trade, energy, security, culture, education, and interpersonal relations. The leaders concurred that there is a large potential for mutual trade between the two states. They decided to collaborate in order to strengthen their economic connections and expand commerce (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2018).

Pakistan-Russia 70th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations

On May 1, 2018, both Russia and Pakistan celebrated the 70th anniversary of their diplomatic ties with considerable zeal and enthusiasm. A mature cooperation between Pakistan and Russia replaced their fast friendship. Mutual trust, shared interests, and agreement on significant regional and international issues are characteristics of the two nations’ relations. Both countries share similar interests in the long-term peace and stability of their shared neighbourhood as well as similar hopes for the prosperity of the region. Similarly, the extensive increase persisted through powerful communication via institutionalized proceedings and strengthening coordination in different sectors. That includes trade and commerce, banking and finance, agriculture and

industry, defence and security, education and technology, and the development of energy and infrastructure (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Government of Pakistan, 2018).

Pakistan-Russia Arms Deals

In 2014, Russia ended a prolonged arms embargo on Pakistan, and ever since, Moscow has been striving to strengthen its defence ties with Islamabad. The fact that the Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, met with Russian civil and military leaders, including Col. Gen. Oleg Sayukov, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Land Forces, and Sergey Naryshkin, Speaker of the Russian State Duma, during his visit to Moscow in June 2015 made the trip noteworthy. They discussed a variety of regional and global issues. General Raheel Sharif also visited a defence exhibition that featured a variety of aircraft, helicopters, and missiles (Naqvi and Masood, n.d.).

Russia and Pakistan negotiated the sale of Mi-35M helicopters and Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets in September 2015. A draught contract for the shipment of four Mi-35M Hind E combat helicopters was delivered by Russia to Pakistan earlier this year. The relations between Russia and Pakistan were advancing in other fields as well, such as energy. The fifth generation of jet technology is also used in the twin-engine, multi-role Su-35 combat aircraft of the fourth generation (Dawn, 2015). For the sale of defence equipment to Pakistan to proceed, a second technical cooperation agreement was concluded in 2015 (Dawn, 2015).

During the former COAS Raheel Sharif's visit to Russia in June 2016, Islamabad and Moscow signed a deal for a \$153 million helicopter. A preliminary agreement was signed in August 2015 at the Pakistan Army General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi. The Mi-35M is equipped with an anti-tank guided missile system in addition to an 80 and 120-millimetre rocket and a twin-barrel "GSh-23 V 23" millimetre gun that is mounted on the aircraft. The Pakistani military buy up to 20 brand-new Mi-35M helicopters in the future years. The Pakistani military would make a sensible economical choice if they decided to

extend their fleet beyond four aircraft, given the expense of building the requisite Mi-35M logistics and maintenance infrastructure (Gady, 2018). On August 29, 2017, Islamabad expressed interest in purchasing 20 more attack helicopters, and on the same day, four Russian Mi-35M Hind-E assault helicopters were delivered (Khan, 2019).

A Russian group in Pakistan talks about the sale of military weaponry. An official team from Russia's Federal Service for Technical and Military Cooperation visited General Headquarters in 2016, Fomin Alexander Vasilyevich led the delegation and meet with COAS Raheel Sharif. The defence agreement signalled a significant change in Russian policy toward Pakistan and the start of a new era in the two countries' relations (Dawn, January 2016).

Russian T-90 tanks, Su-35 jets, and air defence systems are of utmost interest to Pakistan. Talks between the two nations are held in this regard. It appears that Russia is hesitant and cautious about selling Pakistan military equipment that can be used for anything other than counterterrorism activities. It remains to be seen if Russia would be willing to take such a risk by engaging in a defence alliance with Pakistan that would scare India (Khan, 2019).

Conclusion

The period from 2010 to 2020 witnessed a transformative shift in Pakistan-Russia relations, evolving from historical hostilities to a strategic partnership. This shift holds global significance, influencing the geopolitical landscape and contributing to regional stability. The study delves into the intricate dynamics, highlighting key milestones, defense cooperation, and diplomatic exchanges. The journey reflects a convergence of interests and mutual recognition of collaboration's importance. The analysis shows that relation between the two countries improved especially after the strategic dialogue of 2013. After that, Russia lifted the arms embargo on Pakistan in 2014. Pakistan and Russia formed joint working groups on strategic stability counter terrorism and strategic dialogue, under these joint working groups both Russia and Pakistan jointly worked to counter

terrorism and to bring peace and stability to the region.

Pakistan and Russia participated in regional and international military exercises like Druzhba, Aman, Arabian Monsoon, and Tsentr-2019. In 2018, under a joint military consultative committee, JMCC Russia agreed to give military training to Pakistani soldiers in Russia. The JMCC is a top platform for defence cooperation between Pakistan and Russia. Pakistan and Russia jointly worked for regional and global security, and Afghanistan was the common interest between the two countries. Pakistan and Russia also signed arms deals for a \$153 million helicopter during the visit of COAS Raheel Sharif in 2016. Apart from this, both countries discussed the sale of military weaponry. These were the major development in Pakistan-Russia's political and defence relations after 2010.

Despite historical tensions, these developments underscore a gradual shift toward a more robust partnership, contributing to regional stability. However, challenges persist, and it remains to be seen how Pakistan and Russia navigate their complex geopolitical landscape in the future. If we compare this development with our past relations it is too little because both countries have tense relations and it will take time to establish good friendly relations. Pakistan could not replace India with Russia still Russia and India have good relations. Pakistan also has a strong military relationship with US and China.

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