



中国传媒大学  
COMMUNICATION UNIVERSITY OF CHINA



Institute for a Community  
with Shared Future  
人类命运共同体研究院



## Community with a Shared Future in an Era of Fragmented Globalization



By Mr. Imran Bhatti, Member Board of Experts,  
Pakistan Research Center for a Community with  
Shared Future (PRCCSF), Islamabad

*Published on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026*



## **Abstract**

*As the post-Cold War consensus on globalization fractures under the weight of geopolitical rivalry and economic nationalism, the international order stands at a critical juncture. This strategic analysis examines the transition from hyper-globalization to an era of fragmented integration, characterized by the weaponization of interdependence and the rise of competing economic blocs. It argues that the concept of a "Community with a Shared Future" offers a necessary structural alternative—a development-centered security model that prioritizes connectivity over containment. Focusing on the expansion of BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the paper evaluates how the Global South is recalibrating its financial and security architecture. Specifically, it explores Pakistan's potential as a pivotal bridging state. Situated at the nexus of South and Central Asia, Pakistan can leverage CPEC 2.0 to operationalize this shared future, acting as a stabilizer between diverging geoeconomic spheres. The paper concludes with scenario-based forecasts for 2030 and actionable policy recommendations for navigating this multipolar transition.*

## **1. Introduction**

The global order is undergoing a profound structural metamorphosis. The era of unchecked globalization—defined by the free flow of capital, seamless supply chains, and the assumption that economic interdependence would guarantee peace—has abruptly concluded. In its place, a fragmented landscape is emerging, marked by securitized trade, technological decoupling, and the return of great power rivalry. This shift is not merely a cyclical downturn but a fundamental reorganization of international relations, driven by what scholars term "weaponized interdependence," where the very networks that once connected nations are now leveraged as instruments of coercion.

For nations of the Global South, particularly Pakistan, this fragmentation presents an existential paradox: the traditional pathways to development via Western-led liberalization are narrowing, yet the imperative for economic modernization remains acute. It is within this vacuum of certainty that the concept of a "Community with a Shared Future" gains strategic salience. Far from being abstract rhetoric, it represents a tangible structural response to the failures of the unipolar moment. It posits a model of international relations based not on zero-sum alliance systems, but on indivisible security and inclusive development.

This paper analyzes the contours of this new era. It juxtaposes the forces of deglobalization against the counter-currents of regional integration, assesses the rising influence of non-Western economic blocs like BRICS and the SCO, and evaluates Pakistan's unique role as a geoeconomic



fulcrum. Ultimately, it argues that for Pakistan, the "Community with a Shared Future" is not just a diplomatic slogan, but a blueprint for survival and prosperity in a multipolar 21st century.

## 2. Deglobalization vs. Regional Integration: The Structural Shift

We are not witnessing the end of globalization, but rather its radical restructuring. The "flat world" thesis has been supplanted by a reality of "gated globalization." This transformation is driven by three primary vectors: the securitization of supply chains, the proliferation of sanctions regimes, and strategic decoupling in critical technologies.

### *The Weaponization of Interdependence*

The global economy is fracturing into distinct spheres of influence. The United States and its allies have increasingly utilized the centrality of the dollar-based financial system and control over semiconductor supply chains to exert political pressure. This "economic statecraft" has forced nations to reconsider efficiency in favor of resilience. Just-in-time supply chains are being replaced by "friend-shoring," creating exclusive economic zones that exclude geopolitical adversaries.

### *The Rise of Regional Resilience*

Paradoxically, as global multilateralism falters, regional integration is accelerating. Facing protectionism from the West, nations in Eurasia, Africa, and Latin America are thickening their intra-regional ties. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in Asia and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) demonstrate a shift toward localized economic sovereignty. This is a defensive response to fragmented globalization: if the global commons are no longer open, regional fortresses must be built.

For the PRCCSF, this trend validates the "Community with a Shared Future" framework. Unlike the neoliberal model, which prioritized capital efficiency often at the cost of local stability, this new paradigm emphasizes "developmental security"—the idea that sustainable security can only be achieved through shared economic prosperity. Regional integration serves as the building block for this new architecture, offering a buffer against the volatility of the dollar-centric global system.



### 3. Economic Blocs and Emerging Power Platforms

The institutional void left by the paralysis of the WTO and the UN Security Council is being filled by emerging power platforms. The expansion of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, and new entrants) and the strengthening of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) represent the most significant geopolitical realignment since 1991.

#### ***BRICS+: A New Financial Architecture***

The recent expansion of BRICS is a clear signal of the Global South's desire for alternative financial mechanisms. The New Development Bank (NDB) and the push for local currency settlements are not merely technical adjustments; they are strategic maneuvers to de-risk economies from unilateral sanctions. By reducing reliance on the SWIFT system and the US dollar, BRICS nations are building the "plumbing" for a multipolar economic order. This aligns perfectly with the "Shared Future" vision, creating a more democratic international financial system that reflects the realities of the 21st-century global economy.

#### ***SCO: The Eurasian Stabilizer***

Similarly, the SCO has evolved from a border security pact into a comprehensive Eurasian platform for economic and security cooperation. It represents a "Community with a Shared Future" in microcosm—a vast geographic space connected by energy pipelines, transport corridors, and counter-terrorism frameworks. For middle powers, the SCO offers a venue to negotiate interests without the conditionalities often attached to Western engagement. It is a model of "partnership without alliance," prioritizing consensus over coercion.

Middle powers are recalibrating their positions, opting for "multi-alignment." They refuse to choose sides in a new Cold War, instead engaging transactionally with all major poles. This fluidity reinforces the need for inclusive frameworks like the "Shared Future," which accommodate diverse political systems and development paths.

### 4. Pakistan's Bridging Role: Geography as Strategy

In this fragmented landscape, Pakistan's strategic relevance is renewed. Situated at the convergence of South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, and China, Pakistan is the natural zipper of Eurasia. However, geography is only potential; connectivity is the realization of that potential.



## ***CPEC 2.0: From Infrastructure to Industrialization***

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) remains the flagship project of the "Community with a Shared Future." As CPEC enters its second phase (CPEC 2.0), the focus must shift from hard infrastructure (roads and power plants) to industrial cooperation, agriculture modernization, and digital connectivity. CPEC serves as the north-south axis of Eurasian integration, offering landlocked Central Asia access to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea via Gwadar.

This corridor is not just a transit route; it is a tool for geoeconomic stabilization. By intertwining the economic fates of its neighbors, Pakistan can increase the cost of conflict. A "Shared Future" in South Asia requires that Pakistan leverages CPEC to create vested interests for all regional players, including historically adversarial ones, in the stability of trade flows.

### ***The Stabilizing Actor***

Pakistan has the potential to act as a "diplomatic bridge" between competing blocs. Just as it facilitated the rapprochement between the US and China in the 1970s, today Pakistan can mediate between the Islamic world and the rising Eurasian powers. By avoiding strict bloc politics and maintaining diversified relationships—strong strategic ties with China, historical relations with the West, and growing engagement with Russia and the Gulf—Pakistan exemplifies the "Shared Future" ethos of dialogue and inclusivity.

## **5. Scenario-Based Forecasting: The Horizon of 2030**

To aid policymakers, we forecast two potential trajectories for the global order and Pakistan's place within it by the year 2030.

### ***Scenario A: The "Shared Prosperity" Outcome (Best Case)***

By 2030, regional integration frameworks (SCO, RCEP, African Union) successfully coalesce into a functional multipolar order. Trade wars subside into managed competition. CPEC 2.0 succeeds in industrializing Pakistan, making it a key manufacturing hub for export to the Middle East and Africa. The "Community with a Shared Future" concept becomes the normative basis for UN reform, prioritizing collective development. Pakistan effectively balances its relations, serving as a transit hub for energy from Russia/Central Asia and goods from China.



## Scenario B: The "Fragmented Fortress" Outcome (Worst Case)

The world splits into rigid, mutually exclusive economic blocs (a "Digital Iron Curtain"). Sanctions bifurcate the global financial system completely. Pakistan is forced to choose a side, losing access to critical Western export markets or Eastern development capital. Regional tensions flare, stalling CPEC projects due to security concerns. In this scenario, the "Shared Future" remains aspirational as zero-sum geopolitics dominate, trapping middle powers in a cycle of instability and debt.

## 6. Strategic Recommendations

To navigate this complex environment and operationalize the "Community with a Shared Future," Pakistan must adopt a proactive, geoeconomic foreign policy.

- 1. Institutionalize "Multi-Alignment":** Formally adopt a policy of diversifying economic and security partnerships. While deepening the strategic partnership with China, Pakistan must actively court investment from the Gulf (via SIFC), the EU, and ASEAN to prevent over-dependence on any single pole.
- 2. Operationalize the "Digital Silk Road":** Prioritize AI-enabled digital connectivity within CPEC 2.0. Establish cross-border data corridors and digital trade zones with China and Central Asia to bypass physical logistical bottlenecks and modernize the domestic tech ecosystem.
- 3. Champion Local Currency Trade:** Actively participate in BRICS+ initiatives to trade in local currencies. Pakistan should pilot currency swap agreements with major trading partners (China, Russia, Saudi Arabia) to reduce pressure on foreign exchange reserves and insulate the economy from dollar volatility.
- 4. Revitalize Regional Transit Diplomacy:** Aggressively market Gwadar not just as a Chinese port, but as the "Trans-Afghan Gateway" for Central Asian republics. Offer preferential transit tariffs and simplified customs procedures to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan to cement their economic stake in Pakistan's stability.
- 5. Development-Centric Security Doctrine:** Internally, Pakistan must align its National Security Policy (NSP) strictly with the "Shared Future" model, where economic security is paramount. This means resolving internal security challenges through development packages in peripheral regions (like Balochistan/KP) rather than purely kinetic means.



**6. Leverage the SCO for Counter-Terrorism:** Utilize the SCO’s Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) to coordinate intelligence sharing and border management. Frame regional terrorism not as a bilateral issue but as a collective threat to the "Shared Future" of Eurasian integration, garnering multilateral support for border security.



## 7. Conclusion

The fragmentation of globalization is an irreversible historical fact, but chaos is not inevitable. The concept of a "Community with a Shared Future" offers a lucid roadmap out of the current geopolitical morass. It recognizes that in an era of complex interdependence—spanning climate change, pandemics, and supply chains—no nation can be secure in isolation.

For Pakistan, the path forward is clear but arduous. It must shed the vestigial identity of a geopolitical client state and embrace its destiny as a geo-economic hub. By leveraging its location, deepening regional connectivity through CPEC and the SCO, and advocating for a just, multipolar financial order, Pakistan can transform from a battleground of competing powers into a bridge for shared prosperity. The "Shared Future" is not a utopian dream; it is a pragmatic necessity for the survival of the Global South in the 21st century.