



中华人民共和国驻巴基斯坦伊斯兰共和国大使馆  
Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



## CONFERENCE REPORT

*One-Day Conference, Book Exhibition and Student Competition on*

# "Understanding China: Looking beyond the Horizon"

## Organizers:



Department of Political Science & International Relations,  
University of the Punjab, Lahore



Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared  
Future (PRCCSF), Islamabad



Embassy of People's Republic of China to Pakistan

## Meet-up!



Date: March 20th, 2023



Venue: Al-Raazi Hall, University of the  
Punjab, Lahore



Phone: +92(0) 42 9923 1229



E-mail: [chairperson.polsc.@pu.edu.pk](mailto:chairperson.polsc.@pu.edu.pk)  
Website: [www.pu.edu.pk](http://www.pu.edu.pk)



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**Organized by**  
**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**  
**&**  
**Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared Future**  
**(PRCCSF), Islamabad in collaboration**  
**With**  
**Embassy of People's Republic of China to Pakistan, Islamabad**  
**at**  
**Al-Razi Hall, University of the Punjab, Lahore**  
**on**  
**March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**



One-Day Conference, Book Exhibition and Student Competition on  
"Understanding China: Looking beyond the Horizon"

## Report Arrangement Team:

## Report Written & Edited by:

**Name:** Samreen Shahbaz

**Affiliation:** Student of M. Phil IR, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab

**Contact Information:** [samrskc@gmail.com](mailto:samrskc@gmail.com) , +92 304 4731923

**Name:** Sumaira Akram

**Affiliation:** Student of M. Phil IR, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab

**Contact Information:** [sumaira3195@gmail.com](mailto:sumaira3195@gmail.com), +92 347 1461389

## Reviewed & Remarked by:

**Name:** Dr. Muhammad Shareh Qazi

**Affiliation:** Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab

**Position:** Assistant Professor

**Contact Information:** [shareh.polsc@pu.edu.pk](mailto:shareh.polsc@pu.edu.pk), +92 307 8888559

**Name:** Khalid Taimur Akram

**Affiliation:** Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared Future (PRCCSF), Islamabad

**Position:** Executive Director

**Contact Information:** [prccsf@yahoo.com](mailto:prccsf@yahoo.com), +92 300 5015706

## Final Review & Approved by:

**Name:** Dr. Irum Khalid

**Affiliation:** Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab

**Position:** Chairperson

**Contact Information:** [chairperson.polsc@pu.edu.pk](mailto:chairperson.polsc@pu.edu.pk), +92 42 99231229



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## Overview of the Conference

The conference program detailed as One-Day Conference, Book Exhibition and Student Competition on “Understanding China: Looking beyond the Horizon”. This one-day conference jointly organized by the Department of Political Science & International Relations, University of the Punjab, Lahore, and Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared Future (PRCCSF), a think tank based in Islamabad in collaboration with the Embassy of People’s Republic of China to Pakistan on Monday, 20th March 2023. This trio of institutes collaborated and called for a timely conference to discuss the imminent challenges faced by an emerging power China, opportunities for the neighboring countries and most importantly to debunk and allude to the counter narratives that have been shaped by the power in opposition. This comprised of engaging in the experienced speaker guests and audiences to broaden the perspectives on relationships between China and Pakistan by breaking down the understanding of China in not only its policy making or decision making process for its mundane pursuits but also chalking out its several philosophical frameworks that have resultantly become a reason of China’s success on the stage of World politics in the form of its prioritization of projection soft power over hard power in the realist domain. The several important developments currently taking place by China have also been discussed and critically analyzed its implications on international politics.

The multi-disciplinary human resource of this conference was comprised of people who have decades of experience on understanding China in past, present, and predicting its prospects in future in the view of its current performances. These included prominent experts, academicians and researchers in the field of political science, economics, foreign affairs, history, and diplomatic affairs. The academia of the University of the Punjab presented their thoughts on making sense of rising China and challenges and opportunities associate with BRI. Experts and academicians from



the Communication University of China presented their thoughts on the subject under discussion through their online participation. Moreover, students from the department of Political Science presented their work through research papers, books exhibition, thesis display on the area of understanding China. They projected their thoughts through participating in a board competition which further exacerbated the curiosity to know China in the minds of younger generation. Ambassador Javid Husain, Diplomat, (former) Ambassador of Pakistan to Iran, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, a (former) Permanent Representative of Pakistan to Economic Cooperation Organization, and Ambassador Masood Khalid Diplomat (former) Ambassador of Pakistan to China, South Korea, Malaysia were invited as the chief guests of the conference.

This conference highlighted how People's Republic of China initiated one of its most landmarks global initiatives in connectivity and a global community for a shared future. It envisaged a goal to provide multifarious platforms or economic, social and political cooperation. China's vision of integrating and connecting states into a diverse and dynamic forum for expressing concerns and exploring new avenues of building a shared future. It emphasized that China understands the need for appreciating nontraditional and traditional challenges to global and international security and it is also cognizant of how a post-pandemic environment is panning out. A new wave of conflicts and crises, reintroduction of a looming global economic meltdown and growing concerns of how the future of the world would be. It was discussed that for China, looking into middle income to low-income states and their position in the international political, economic and social systems would be is a cause for serious concern. For China, creating the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is a step in creating political consensus among states that require a composite forum for settlement of political and strategic disputes and addressing future trajectories of global political incongruities. The conference has alluded to China's offer to regional and international





stakeholders through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a chance at reconnecting economically and to create a financial linkage in order to avert a future economic concern at global level. The BRI has been understood as a forum opportunity for state partners in integrating bilaterally to construct long term commitments in an integrated environment. The aim of New Silk Route is not only providing investment opportunities for partner states, but it also serves as a design to facilitate transfer of technological resources, human capital and infrastructural assistance. The further aim is to synergize mutual growth in a noncompetitive environment for state partners and collaborating organizations.

China's commitment to inclusivity of purpose and mutual settlement of goals and objectives allows for the international community to understand value of a shared future. The need for a global community constructed on a shared enterprise is not only an opportunity but also a strategic inevitability. Triggering global connectivity and regional integration is a feature of a globalized and incorporated world and China understands the need of synergizing regional connectivity with emerging traditional and nontraditional global goals.

The Symposium aimed at understanding some of the most crucial aspects of China's vision of a shared global community and its impact on the global economic, social, political, and strategic system. The event developed a critique on China's role in the international community and appreciated some of its most vital junctions. This report articulates main takeaways and policy recommendation extracted from the subthemes and flow of this symposium as discussed and presented by the speakers guests and students of the Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore to be taken as input for policy making institutions.





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"Understanding China: Looking beyond the Horizon"

## Participants:

The participants for one-day conference on understanding China's vision of integrating and connecting states into a diverse and dynamic forum for expressing concerns and exploring new avenues of building a shared future comprised of experts, academicians, and researchers in the field of political science, economics, foreign affairs, history, diplomatic affairs, and interested in international relations and global affairs. They provided insights into China's offer to regional and international stakeholders through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as a chance at reconnecting economically and to create a financial linkage in order to avert a future economic concern at global level. This knowledge is important to fabricate foreign policy towards China, develop strategies to work with China, navigate the complex regulatory environment, anticipate changes in policy, identify new business opportunities, inform academic and research work, and provide nuanced coverage of Chinese politics and society.



## Introduction & Welcome Remarks

**Prof. Dr. Iram Khalid**

**Chairperson, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

She said that we would try today to answer as many questions as possible because being a student of international relations myself, my understanding is that the world is looking through a lens of surprise to the development of China although the opponents are making queries about the procedure and process. Enemies are also making noise to snub the voice of progress and prosperity but here there are some very relevant questions and I have tried my best to compile these questions by looking not only to the western literature but also from some very regional neighbors and from regional powers. The questions are like that

1. Can China sustain its economic miracle in the face of demographic and environmental challenges when the competition is with US?
2. What's driving efforts by both sides to open channels of communication between Washington and Beijing?
3. Why improving the tone of US relation won't be enough to resolve their differences?
4. There is a strong debate that is China seeking to reshape the international system according to its own interests?
5. What is the actual reality?

So, these are all arising concerns and queries in the minds of students or international relations. Today's effort is basically to answer these all questions and, in the end, I just want to add two or three points related to area study. Under prevailing circumstances, we are blessed by having a friend like China, who is promoting the opportunity for youth. This gesture is an element of hope



and this is actually the real strength for youth, but I just want to add a very simple point that is it possible that if we could have China chair in the department of political science and under that here our students can have a permanent forum to research on China, Chinese strategies, Chinese development model and some new avenues like that. We have literature in the department but the literature is not enough that our students can have the research on the latest areas or latest ideas as Chinese are giving their strategies and I believe that they are giving all these strategies by evaluating in their university or evaluating by their professors. So I on the behalf of department of political science, I really want to add this request that, if these all distinguish guests those have the resources, those are experienced, they can help us by providing some latest understanding regarding the Chinese philosophies, regarding the Chinese new strategies in that 21st century, we all be very thankful to all these guests and the last request that in Pakistan, HEC provides research projects regarding the joint project with developed countries but they never gave the opportunity to the Pakistani students of joint research project with China. Thank you so much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- Traditionally culture, society, history, economics, political system and leadership are the basic tools to look into any state but in the 21st century, we have to add some new areas when we want to understand a rising power and their gradual and constant strategy of development, their focused and regional leadership by having their own plans for their own people and for the world.
- Understanding the BRI is a point and some solid efforts are required regarding the establishment of this new BRI center in University of Punjab, if they do not want to limit it to the Department of Political Science then it can be established in the University of



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Punjab. The center can be used for understanding idea of community with shared future idea.



## Address by

**Prof. Dr. Rana Eijaz Ahmad**

**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

His presentation was regarding understanding China in the neo-cold war era. He said, it's surprising that usually the term is used as post cold era but I usually use its neo cold war era. Why it is a neo cold war era and not post-cold war. Post-cold war still existing, it's not and so far, people usually believe that in 1991, when there was a collapse of Soviet Union it was ended and this is supposed cold war era; This is how they believe. Here are some questions we answered regarding understanding China.

1. Why does China matter?
2. Will China's rise be peaceful?
3. How is China and its foreign policy changing?
4. What determines China's foreign policy as it rises?
5. Is China still a poor country, or is it rich and powerful?
6. What do the Chinese really want?
7. Is China still communist?
8. Is it form of government or system capabilities that matters?
9. Will China surpass the US as the world's superpower? and last
10. Should the world perceive China as a threat or an opportunity?

He answered these questions briefly. Why does China matter? Such a populous country in the world and the second largest considered economy and it is said that it is contributing in the 15% of the global GDP. So that is why China matters and it is considered China will continue to be an engine of global output even though growth is slowing according to the IMF sources.



Number two question is going to be answered, will China's rise be peaceful. The debate is regarding ongoing US China trade war. How IMF will proceed in the conflictual environment as institutions both IMF and World Bank are under the influence of the United States.

The third question, how is China foreign policy changing. What I understand is it believes in interdependence and thoughts that based on meditation.

Number four, what determines China's foreign policy as it rises. It is more cooperative, behaving as norms of globalization and pursuing the world through interdependence instead of monopolization or dictation that has been the value of the colonial world.

Number five is China still a poor country, or is it rich and powerful; several economists and investment banks have raised their projections of China's GDP growth between 6 to 6.5 percent. So, one can imagine the China makes up the 18.45% of the total global economy. The top two richest countries in the world combined harbor 42.38% of the world economy. It is a calculation made in 2023.

Number six, what do the Chinese really want; interdependence and obviously the world leadership but not through monopolization but by cooperation.

Number seven is China still a communist country; China has an economic ideology that believes in a state intervention in the market forces and in mixed economy.

Number eight, is it form of government or system capabilities that matter; what I understand by observing in China, that it is not the form of government that matters, in the 21st century it is rather system capabilities that matters for the socio, political and economic life of any country, and that also measure the socio-economic development of any country.



Number nine, will China surpass the US as a world superpower; China, at least, not considering it to surpass any other country regarding its power or might. It is focusing on the growth and ruling over the world.

Number tenth, should the world perceive China as an opportunity or a threat. Obviously, it is an opportunity, it is not a threat because we do not find any history at macro levels, especially outside China, China never intervened and never made any political aggrandization.

Additionally, he talked about China economic corridors. There are six economic corridors regarding Chinese policies. Five are in Asia and one is in Europe and all six economic corridors are going to give such cooperation for those meager economies or weak economies in the world based on interdependence, not on dependence. Pakistan is going on with China with the most important economic corridor that is known as China-Pakistan economic corridor because it is connecting all other five economic corridors to the waters that's hot waters usually considered. So that is what the importance of the China-Pakistan economic corridor. Regarding the conclusion, What I believe there is a big dream, but it seems very pragmatic. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- China is leading the country in a neo-Cold War era with an inclusive approach instead of monopolizing the economic resources of the world. It is integrating the world instead of indulging them in war conditions, supporting the weak economies through economic corridors.
- Neo-cold war means that there are certain diversified manifestations of cold war in political economic social security and environmental concerns.
- China is integrating Asia, Africa and Europe through its economic corridors and it believes in interdependence instead of dependence. It believes in Confucius policies and thoughts





that based on meditation. So, that is Meditational Realism term is being used. It is not offensive or defensive realism, it is a third kind of realism that is a direct result of meditation, introspection and contemplation.

- China has an economic ideology that believes in a state intervention in the market forces, but understanding China and its policies, it is held that it believes in mixed economy for that another word is used as Libracantilism, that is a mixture of liberalism and mercantilism.



## Keynote Speaker

**Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram**

**Executive Director, Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared Future (PRCCSF), Islamabad**

The topic of his speech was understanding China looking beyond the horizons. From 1949 onwards, once the Chinese communist party took to power and begin to implement its new policies, their victory to power led to their establishment of the People's Republic of China on first October 1949. The establishment of PRC marked a major shift in China's political economic and social landscape. The new government implemented socialist policies and embarked on a program of land reforms. The government also nationalized industries and established a planned economy. Land reforms for one of the most important milestones in distributing land from wealthy landlords to the poor people and hence onwards, the Chinese economy took off. After Mao Zedong in 1978, another opening up policy was adopted by the Chinese government. The China became the member of the WTO on 11th, December 2001 after 15 years of negotiations with them. After coming to WTO, China has been playing a very constructive role, not only in WTO but also in many other international organizations.

Then comes the historical development plan of the region and beyond which is known as the Belt and Road Initiative. It is seen by many as a mean for China to expand global development and strengthen economic ties with other countries. One of the key objectives of the BRI is to stimulate economic growth in developing countries by improving their infrastructure and connectivity by providing access to modern transportation and communication networks. BRI aims to promote, trade and investment, create jobs, and increase cooperation. Initiative also seeks to address the infrastructure gap in many countries, particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia where



the access to the basic infrastructure was limited before. Despite criticism of the Western propaganda, the BRI gained significant momentum over the years and now over 160 countries are partners with China and BRI. China has expressed to invest more than one trillion US dollars in the BRI projects and many countries have welcomed the opportunities to improve their infrastructure and boost their economies. After BRI, they introduced another concept. So let me just talk on that concept also, that is the community of shared future. China believes on multilateralism and better world for all and president Xi Jinping has always been stressing on that. China has been actively promoting the concept of community of shared future in its foreign policy, emphasizing the need for the global cooperation, and mutual respect and win-win outcome for everybody. China has also been promoting the idea of community of shared future, not only outside but within the China and domestically also in their policies for economic and social development. Within the China the concept has been used to justify policies aimed at reducing property, promoting sustainable development and building more harmonious society within China.

Then comes another concept global development initiative by China. The GDI puts development first, and people at its center of the policies and seeks to expedite the implementation of the 2030 agenda. The GDI is not different than the UN SDGs, it is in fact more elaborated form of SDGs. Very recently, the Chinese government has given another concept, which is known as the global security initiative. The core values of this new concept which has just been given out by the Chinese government is one, to stay committed to the vision of common comprehensive cooperative and sustainable security. All the countries should be committed to abiding by the purposes and principle of the UN chartered. None of the Chinese concepts are beyond US chartered. So, you may find lot of propaganda against the Chinese government that they are trying to bring in their own system. No, they are not trying to bring in any kind of new system but they are just



elaborating whatever is existing and they are just fulfilling those gaps which are there in the existing charter of the United Nations but this is no way parallel to UN. It is part and parcel of whatever is already there. China's approach to the global engagement is focused on promoting shared development and mutual benefit rather than seeking to establish a colonial or a non-colonial relationship with the other countries. Right now, the western media especially in Europe and America, they are trying to promote this concept that maybe China is trying to develop colonial system all over the world but if you see these concepts, whether it's the concept of the community of shared future, whether it is the concept of the GDIs or the GSIs; None of this is in conflict to any countries interest and none of these are in conflict with already existing charters of the United Nations. So, we must understand these concepts and we must not fall prey to the Western propaganda.

The Chinese government has vested this responsibility with China communication university for promoting this idea. I will talk to China communication university and let us establish some kind of institute of community of shared future or institute for BRI over here because BRI is just one component of the complete thing because after BRI, there are so many other things have come up. So, it would be unfair to the other concepts that if we restricted to BRI. So, let's make some kind center and I will get you connected with the China communication university and we can have a Chinese center over here. This Chinese Center can be connected to all of the centers in 160 countries because right now, Pakistan research center for community with shades, which is part of the China communication university, and it is a established jointly with them. So, we are part of that network of 160 country and academic think can be a conducted over here. And I was just going through the thesis which are displayed outside. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, whenever a student of MPhil or PHD, they do their thesis. There are just two copies, one



displayed in your library, and the second one, the student displays in his or her house. So, why not, if we start talking with the partner institute all over the world regarding these concepts and the student should be given the research work accordingly and then whatever research they do that can be published over there also, so that the student can benefit out of it. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- The Belt and Road Initiative is a global infrastructure development plan launched by the Chinese government in 2013 and this year will be marked as the 10th year of BRI. The initiative aims to enhance connectivity and population between countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and beyond by building vast network of infrastructure projects, including highways, railways ports, and energy pipelines
- The concept of community of shared future was given also initialing 2013 but in last five years, the Chinese government has emphasized more on this concept. It refers to the idea that all nations of the world should work together to build a better future for humanity and based on the shared interest and responsibilities. This concept is based on the idea that world is becoming increasingly interconnected and all nations large and small developed or developing should stay together and work together.
- President proposed GDI at the United Nations General Assembly session, aiming at building a global community of development. The global development initiatives aim to support timely achievement of all 17 SDGs of the 2030 agenda of United Nation.
- President Xi Jinping has proposed the global security initiative calling on the countries to adopt the changing international landscape in a way that the security challenges are also interdependent on each other and a win-win mindset is created.



## Address by

**Dr. Shabbir Ahmad Khan**

**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

He focused on China's political elite and major focus was on China is posing a threat, not to the regional or global security of the world rather established critical ideas of the West. He said, I will little bit focus on this issue as well and in the end, I will just recommend few policies to the current Chinese leadership regarding Pakistan's current economic crisis and China's rule.

In a couple of weeks, there was again a change in in China; the Chinese leader has been appointed for his third term as a president. In China, the president has four caps, as the general secretary of the communist party of China, as the president of the country, as the chairman of the central military commission, which is the top military post and forth as the head of the old bureau standing committee, which consists of only seven members, the highest decision-making body in China. As you have seen what has happened in the oldest democracy, United Kingdom. They have seen three leaders, prime ministers in only three months and what's going on in USA where the previous leader is not yet accepting the results of the previous elections and there is a crisis but China has a stable leadership. Power in China is contingent upon to major factors and defined by one political philosopher, one is the formal office and other is the informal way for elite connections. The party and the government in China are two in one; government is headed by the prime minister chosen by the national legislative and consisting of almost more than three thousand elected members along with the 30-member state cabinet. However, actual power lies with the seven member of a bureau committee that is appointed by the central committee of the party. When we come to this point that how China is posing threat to the Western ideas, to major ideas of democracy and the state. Chinese one party not a democracy like Western countries but the liberals



and the Western world, they have pride over one concept or idea what is called those democracies do not fight each other, the democracies are peaceful, but you have seen in the world that the wars started by the democracies of the world. China is neither democracy like Western type democracy, nor capitalist economy like the West but China's peaceful foreign policy indicate that the democracy are peaceful, other nations are also peaceful so both Western ideas, democracy and capitalism are in danger. Like the dominating politics as democratic peace, there is another theory in both economics and politics, Rational Choice Theory that only democracies are major economic powers and major economies do not fight each other, but you have seen that the history of wars, If you look at the Afghanistan recently, even in Afghanistan, Iraq and other areas of the world, democracies were highly involved and the other major challenge, which is related to the point of democracy but it's a slightly different from that aspect. That is the leadership, this is the major challenge to the world these days. Chinese president has been elected for his third term and the method of choosing a leader is different in China than the other western world. It is very close to these the method and processes initiated by the Islamic philosophy about a top leader, this is why China is not leaderless these days, but other nations that are facing serious challenges in choosing their leaders.

Now, I just come from my last point that There's a crisis in the whole world and we have experience after Russian and Ukrainian war that there is a recession. Recently, the former speaker of representative of the United States of America had a visit to Taiwan despite all the opposition from the Chinese. When they have the US authorities that blown up the balloon, a Chinese spying balloon. China should be ready for another crisis after Ukraine war and the world is well prepared, so it might create a threat to China as well in South China Sea. So, keeping in mind that our world is going towards another conflict, China should be working over policies. And what are those? The





recommendations are China should not wait and should come forward to rescue friends and allies in the world like Pakistan. Actions speak Louder than words and we should end the era of talk like claiming or reminding each time that Sino-Pak relations are higher than Himalayas or deeper than oceans or sweeter than honey and stronger than steel. China should initiate CMF China Monetary Fund to help her friends and allies from economic crisis. It is another failure of the Western world, the world institution, IMF is failed. No, China should come forward. In the end, I hope that both China and Pakistan will realize importance of each other. Now time has come for concrete, solid and valid policies or actions. We are proud as a Pakistani on friendship with China. So, I will end this talk with the slogan that Long Live Pak China friendship. Thank you.

### **Main Takeaways**

- China is having an edge over the issue of the leadership. The China has a leader, but there is a crisis of leadership in the Western world.
- If war is highly connected to the interests or economic interests, so economic interests of the world of many powers are in dangers of these days. There is a likelihood of a of a new third world war in future.



## Speech by

**Prof. Li Huailiang**

**Dean of the Institute for a Community with Shared Future, Communication University of China (CUC), Beijing, China.**

China initiated the concept of a human community with the share future to promote the connectivity and common prosperity. After the development of globalization, we have entered the era of global community, building our human community with shared future is a common eternal demand of people from all countries and nations. The CPC 20th National Congress elaborated on his foreign policies with Chinese characteristic in the new year. The president Xi Jinping stressed that China always adheres to foreign policies that oppose maintenance of world peace and promote common development. How to present and promote the world to understand the China's vision and China's governance system and the development model is one of the majors to strategic issue that China should focus on. We need to promote cooperative research and understanding the concept of community of share future. This excellence, to see so many researchers and scholars of present today, with passions and interests on China's governance model. Finally, this event is to strengthen cooperation and establish atmosphere of academic communication which this event is a complete success and hope to see more exchange of dialogue in the near future.

## Main Takeaways

- Looking back on China's historical contribution and future opportunities, the concept of human community with shared future has laid out China path of peaceful development with cooperation strategy that is not only China's proposition but also world proposition.



## Address by Chief Guest

### Ambassador Masood Khalid

**Diplomat (former) Ambassador of Pakistan to China, South Korea, Malaysia.**

He shared his ideas on three themes and started with the international situation, how is that? How is it impacting China? How is it affecting the world? He said, we all agree that the global order is in a state of superflux and our Chinese friends say "the profound changes are taking the world into new period of instability and transformation". President Xi Jinping in his address to the 20th National Congress of CPC in October alluded to strong headwinds and choppy waters. There is great uncertainty and growing turbulence despite globalization and economic interdependence. There is no uniform response to cope with universal challenges like the covid pandemic, climate change, food security, energy and water stress, cyber-crimes, terrorism and migrations etc. we see a violation of the UN charter principles and resort to unilateralism and humanism block, protectionism in cold war mentality and a winner takes it all approach. The war in Ukraine has also sharpened tensions and move towards block politics through reconfiguration. Security order particularly in Europe with its wider regional and global implications. UN has been marginalized. Multilateralism has been pushed back. We see double standards on human rights, in resolution of conflicts, or sharing the development dividends with poor and developing countries. COP-27 is an example where a mitigation fund took 30 years to operationalize, 200 million people have been pushed to live under poverty line because of the covid and the Ukraine war. About 75 countries are under debt stress but there is no worldwide redressal of these monumental problems, which I mentioned, only lip service than action.

Donors are dragging their feet to help Pakistan's flood affected economy. US China competition and the US. Russian competition has sharpened polarization in international system.



Graham Allison and some of the leading American scholars now openly talk about the possibility of a military clash between the United States and China. The west is waging war in Russia in Ukraine while China is being contained through a chain of security alliances under the US Indo Pacific strategy. The center of gravity is moving from west to east with China as the main locomotive of Asia's rise. In the year 2000, Asia accounted for 32% of global GDP. It is now about 43% and expectedly by 2040, its share will rise to about 52%.

US describes China and Russia as the "revisionist powers" and in US view, China is a most consequential strategic competitor for the coming decades. But China maintains that it wants to emerge as a superpower at its own pace. In the new power dynamics, there is greater strategic convergence between China and Russia and new alignments and realignments are taking place at the regional and sub-regional levels. In South Asia, India has been chosen by the United States as its strategic partner to contain China. This has further complicated security environment of the region and created a power asymmetry.

USA has even promised to work with India "to establish control over its disputed land border" with China, this is in the US defense strategy of 2022. US and India have concluded foundational and technology-based agreements, which are of serious implications for regional security.

Pakistan is being pressurized through various instruments, due to its close ties with China. Pakistan opposes block politics and contends to follow an independent trajectory in his foreign policy on the basis of bilateralism. It is a matter of satisfaction that Pakistan and China are sensitive to the attempts being made to create misgivings in their relation and sabotage CPEC. China has a major role to play as a security and development partner in South Asia. It has introduced a new development paradigm through BRI which regional countries welcomed. BRI has emerged as the



biggest public good and international cooperation program after the second world war. It covers 60% of the world's population and nearly 140 of 145 countries of the world. It was announced at a time when no country was willing to invest in Pakistan. As CPEC is helping Pakistan to enhance its connectivity with China as well as with regional countries as part of its focus on geographics as the pivot of Pakistan's foreign policy. Countries, especially developing countries, find China a willing partner to help improve their socioeconomic conditions, without any conditionalities.

Through optimal maximization, maximization of CPEC, Pakistan can realize its real potential as a trade and energy hub in the region. It will also help improve our industrialization exports, Human resource capacity and technological loss through infusion of Chinese technology and capital. In Pakistan, investment has never been more than 20% of its GDP and at least 30% investment is needed to maintain a steady growth rate and to provide more, importantly jobs every year to 1.3 million youth and this needs foreign investment which China is willing to provide. Pakistan spends only 0.24% of its GDP on research and development while China spent 18% of its budget on search and development, consistently for nearly two decades. So if Pakistan wants to become a knowledge economy, Chinese expertise is available at the CPEC and Pakistan needs to enhance its capacity of Chinese investment and I think youth has a special role to play. China has so far been brought 25 billion dollars of investment in Pakistan's company with over 100,000 local jobs and we should be grateful to our Chinese friends for their help, which has been available on all occasions. Even now, instead of finding fault, we should look at our only shortcomings and gaps and correct them. CPEC is not a panacea, it's not an ultimate solution for all our development problems and our developing deficit. It is a catalyst and window of opportunity to upgrade our skills, industrial capacity and economic productivity. Chinese friends expect that Pakistan will use CPEC as a vehicle to move on to the road of self-reliance.



There is a deliberate effort by our adversaries to create doubts about CPEC and to create a wedge in our relations with China. We should defeat their designs, counter-propaganda and further strengthen our time-tested ties with China. We need to learn lessons from China, in 1978, when China began its reforms, it was a very poor country with the per capita income of 150 dollars only and GDP of 300 billion. And at that time Pakistan's per capita was \$250, today China's economy is about 18 trillion dollars and where are we? We are not even 300 billion dollars in terms of our GDP. So, this was the condition. The world bank, another example, refused to give loan to China in 1990 for the Shanghai Metro and today China has one of the best railway systems in the world. The examples act all this is because of the vision of Chinese leadership, good planning, seamless implementation, processed oversight and accountability and above all, the hard work of Chinese people who are creative, artistic and pay attention, to details. There is a strong linkage between academia and industry, which is very important, which is just missing in our case.

China success has been propelled, not only by its civilizational strength or the hard work of his people, it is also largely due to communist parties' emphasis on meritocracy that is the service delivery. Another example, there is a lot of propaganda, there is a pressure in his control in China, then more than 130 million Chinese tourists travel abroad in 2019 before the covered and now again, it is number will increase and they come back to China. If there is repression, if there is suffocation in the society, why would these tourists who go all over the world? They would come back. So, please don't rely on these western sources of information. All the time in the end, I want to see the China-Pakistan relations were not invented with CPEC. China, Pakistan relations, has 74 years old history, please look at the history, they have time tested relationship and the core of this relationship is mutual trust, mutual respect, mutual interest and adherence to non-interference. This relationship is not against any country and neither is CPEC against any country



today. Our relationship is multi-dimensional, and both the countries view it as an anchor for peace and stability of this region. Pakistan should work on self-reliance and don't look towards other countries because this dependency syndrome is not good for Pakistan. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- The emergence of China as a rising power and its non-acceptance of its rise by the sole superpower or the acceptance of its own gradual loss of preeminence in global affairs is at the root cause of tensions. The world is moving from unipolarity to bi-multipolarity. The era of one power dominating the political and economic landscape is over. The center of gravity is moving from west to east with China as the main locomotive of Asia's rise.
- America's China policy is more confrontational than cooperative. Its European and Southeast Asian allies are also not fully on board with USA in choosing sides because of their very strong business and commercial interest.
- Pakistan is lucky to be founding member of CPEC, which is providing Pakistan an opportunity to catch up on its development and infrastructure deficit. It is the largest instrument initiative ever undertaken by a foreign country in Pakistan's history.
- Any talk of decoupling US-China economies or China's isolation from the world politics or the world economy is not only unrealistic but a wishful thinking. Similarly, any talk of China as a threat or China's collapse is also misplaced. China's rise is a historical process, empires rise and fall and this is China's time.





## Address by Chief Guest

### **Ambassador Javid Husain**

**Diplomat, (former) Ambassador of Pakistan to Iran, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, (former) Permanent Representative of Pakistan to Economic Cooperation Organization. Also Served as Minister/Deputy Ambassador in the Pakistan Embassy Beijing.**

I'm sure these events will greatly help in enhancing our understanding of China as a country and as a nation with a rich cultural heritage and a glorious civilization, which has historically made valuable contributions to the mankind's forward march on the road to progress and development. It was with good reason that our Prophet (PBUH) advised his followers to go as far as China in search of knowledge. While the advice was focused primarily on the importance of search for knowledge in our daily lives. It was also an indirect recognition of China's prominence in the advancement of knowledge. It is worth remembering that the life-time of the Prophet (PBUH) coincided with the rule of the Tang dynasty in China which is considered the golden age of China's history.

China for centuries was the world's most productive economy and the most populous trading area. Even as late as the beginning of the 19th century, China produced over 30% of the world GDP – an amount exceeding the GDP of the Western Europe, Eastern Europe and US combined. China's decline and later humiliation at the hands of the western powers started in the 19th centuries as these powers, strengthened, economically technologically and militarily by the industrial revolution, embarked upon the expansion of maritime trade and a worldwide campaign of subjugation of distant lands. China could not remain immune from the expanding power and influence of the Western States which were bent upon exploiting the resources of the rest of the world to their advantage.



The Opium War (1839 to 1842) imposed by the British on China to force it to allow the import of the opium was a beginning of the series of humiliations that China suffered in next years. So, at the hands of the West European powers, the Americans and Japan in the form of unequal treaties and cession of Chinese territory. The success of the Mao Zedong led communist movement and the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, brought to a definite end the century of China's humiliations. The Mao Zedong led communist revolution emancipated China from colonial shackles enabling it to assume its rightful place of respect in the comity of nations as an independent and sovereign nation.

However, it was Deng Xiaoping who really put China on the road to rapid economic progress through his policies of reforms and opening to the outside world approved by the third Plenum of 11th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in December 1978 and initiated in right earnest in 1979. Henceforth, rapid economic development was to be the supreme national goal of China and all of China's policies were to be geared to its realization. Deng's programme of reforms called socialism with Chinese characteristics embodied the move to a market economy internally and the policy of opening to the outside world while maintaining the communist party rule. The process of reforms was initially introduced in the rural sector and after its success, was extended to the urban sector starting from 1984.

These policies have to produce astonishing results. From 1978 to 2011, China maintained an average growth rate of nearly 10% enabling it to double its GDP after every seven years. China GDP in purchasing power parity surpassed that of the US in 2014. Despite some slowing down of China's GDP growth in more recent years, it may overtake the US GDP even in nominal dollar terms before the end of the current decade. China overtook the US as a biggest trader in goods in the world in 2013 with its total trade in goods estimated at dollar 4.16 trillion. The US China trade



balance has turned heavily in favor of China. US exports to China were estimated to be 154\$ billion as against imports from China amounting to 536\$ billion last year in 2022, despite all the economic, trade and technological sanctions imposed by the US.

China's rapid progress gives a feeling of self-satisfaction and justified pride to the Chinese people and their leaders now when China is rapidly closing the gap between it and the states that had subjected it to humiliations in the past. China's incumbent President reflects the hope of the Chinese people when he says that the "greatest Chinese dream" is the "great revival of the Chinese nation". In pursuance of this goal, China aims at the creation of a "rich, strong, democratic, civilized and harmonious socialist modern country" by the year 2049.

China's rapid focus and its growing economic and military power have understandably caused an alarm in Washington, which has adopted the policy of containment of China as a top priority. The growing tensions between China and the US-led West can be resolved through conflict or peaceful means. In the past, in most of the cases whenever an emerging great power challenged the hegemony or domination of an existing power, the two sides were caught in Thucydides' trap leading to conflict. If the past is any guide, the probability of a smooth and peaceful accommodation of China's rise by the US-led West is rather low. So, the world is likely to witness a period of intense strife between the US and China, especially after 2050, by which time China's economic and military power will pose a potent challenge to the US global supremacy. The Asia Pacific region will be the main arena for the interplay of these great powers' conflicts.

These developments have far-reaching implications for Pakistan, and Pakistan-China relations. Both Pakistan and China are fully aware of the importance of the strategic cooperation between the two countries and are determined to strengthen it further in the years to come.



Historically, China has already provided valuable support and assistance to Pakistan in its efforts to accelerate its economic progress. In April 2015, President of China visit to Pakistan have already resulted in substantial changes investment in various economic projects, thus contributing to Pakistan's economic growth and generating additional employment opportunities.

Internally, we would have to stabilize ourselves politically, overcome the menace of terrorism and religious extremism, and adopt a policy of economic reforms to accelerate our economic growth through the improvement of economic management in public and private sectors. Besides that, we should adopt austerity as our national motto so as to raise our national saving rate. A high national saving rate would enable us to increase our national investment rate and accelerate our GDP growth rate on a sustainable basis without falling into the trap of high current account deficit. To these just illustrate this point, whereas China's national saving rate was as high as 50% at a comparable stage of development our national saving rate is as low as about 13%.

In short, the need of hour for us as a nation is to live within our means, devote maximum possible resources for the task of accelerating our economic growth and pursue a low risk and non-adventurous foreign policy, while strengthening our strategic partnership with China and other friendly countries. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- China's rapid economic growth and increasing weight in international trade have enabled it to raise its military expenditure and modernize its armed forces, besides expanding its power and influence at the global and regional levels. It has thus posed an increasingly potent challenge to the US global superiority. It is generally believed that these trends continue, China will emerge as the most powerful economic and military power in the world by 2050.



- Pakistan as a country can also learn from the Chinese experience in overcoming its past weakness and embarking upon the road to progress, prosperity and going strength. Perhaps the most important lesson is that Pakistan should adopt rapid economic growth as its supreme national goal and subordinate everything else to the attainment of this supreme national objective. This will require a single-minded focus on and maximum possible allocation of resources to the task of economic development in a sharp departure from our current policies. This in turn would require us to pursue a low risk and non-adventurous foreign policy to reduce the risk of immediate armed conflict. Over ambitious foreign policy goals should be avoided so that we do not fall into the trap of strategic overstretch and exhaustion in which we are caught at present.



## Working Session-1

### Theme: The Belt and Road Initiative in Aperture: Envisaging a Community with Shared Future

Speaker Guest:

**Prof. Dr. Rehana Saeed Hashmi**

**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

### Topic of Discussion: The Belt and Road Initiative: Designing a Shared Future in a Fractured World

The BRI is best summarized by President Xi: “China will actively promote international co-operation through the Belt and Road Initiative. In doing so, we hope to achieve policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people connectivity and thus build a new platform for international co-operations to create new drivers for shared development.

President Xi emphasizes “policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people connectivity”. The latter involves education, cultural and scientific exchanges to help other countries learn from China’s development experience and the President has launched the Centre for International Knowledge on Development and China’s National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development along with other related initiatives.

Apparently, the plan is projecting a win-win situation for 140 participating countries of Southeast and South Asia, Central Asia, Pacific Oceania, Africa, and Europe, but the United States generally questions the motives and methods behind China’s employment of the BRI and has described it as predatory and a mean for deriving influence through corruption and debt-trap diplomacy. Keeping in mind the existing ideological, political, and economic disagreements amongst the world’s power blocks, one has to understand different narratives regarding China’s gigantic program BRI.



The West under the leadership of USA is projecting BRI as a plan of Chinese strategy to exert strength and reclaim what belongs to China. It will position China in the centre of Eurasian trade market that will drive to other regional countries to submit to Chinese interests.

It is also being projected that China is trying to keep itself socialize with these countries while opening its cultural and lingual centres by the name of Confucius institutes which primarily giving opportunities to learn Chinese language, culture, cuisine, and values. This is one great move to introduce Chinese Civilization to the world.

Another major assertion of BRI's opponents is that China is at the footprints of colonialists and its offered loans would be a debt traps for the low- and middle-income countries. These countries lack technical expertise to evaluate fully the project contract conditions and cannot navigate complicated disputes resolution process which arise with BRI projects. These loans are operated by Chinese designed monetary system, so it has limited or no protection. The western world widely perceives the persistent loan conditions as predatory and voicing that eight countries currently hold a significant risk of debt distress. These are Djibouti, the Maldives, Laos, Montenegro, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Pakistan. These countries not only succumb to debt issues but a geo-strategic risk to US and its allies.

The Hambantota port of Sri Lanka and Gwadar port project from Pakistan is also used as two examples of China's strategy to own and control globally significant logistic confluences that the international community relies on. China's administrative surveillance over the ports will definitely give it an edge to its economic competitors.





Despite all these vulnerabilities, Asian political and business leaders gave overwhelming support to the China's BRI project and it is considered an effort of shared economic future in a fractured world.

While evaluating the global political and economic situation, I must say that as a realist, states must assess the magnitude of policy planning and intentions behind great strategies but at the same time one could believe the idealist approach as well that gave us world institutions through which international regimes are working. The idealism is that BRI is a physical manifestation of the bond between countries that have existed through history and can result in freer movement of people, goods and ideas, and a greater culture of openness.

### **Main Takeaways**

- we hope to achieve policy, infrastructure, trade, financial, and people-to-people connectivity and thus build a new platform for international co-operations to create new drivers for shared development.
- China plan is projecting a win-win situation for 140 participating countries of Southeast and South Asia, Central Asia, Pacific Oceania, Africa, and Europe, but the United States generally questions the motives and methods behind China's employment of the BRI and has described it as predatory and a mean for deriving influence through corruption and debt-trap diplomacy.
- Another major assertion of BRI's opponents is that China is at the footprints of colonialists and its offered loans would be a debt traps for the low- and middle-income countries. The western world widely perceives the persistent loan conditions as predatory and voicing that eight countries currently hold a significant risk of debt distress.



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- The idealism is that BRI is a physical manifestation of the bond between countries that have existed through history and can result in freer movement of people, goods and ideas, and a greater culture of openness.



## Speaker Guest:

**Dr. Zainab Ahmad**

**Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Garrison University Lahore**

We need to understand China's response to US containment and countering China strategy.

Important development in US academia, Graham Allison's book *Destined for war: can China and United States escape Thucydides's Trap?* He establishes by evaluating twelve incidents from history that whenever in the presence of existing power, another power emerges, what are the probabilities? To which he concludes in his entire book, the probability of conflict is high, and it concluded that there could be a conflict between China and USA at any time near in future. Another book *The New Art of war – Chin's Deep Strategy Inside the United States* by William J. Holstein gave a detailed account of Chinese Corporate espionage on thesis of how China injected its agents into America's corporate sector and American technology sector, and they were able to get important data and do reverse engineering.

Two important American scholars have emphasized on understanding China in their scholastic work and these are John Mearsheimer and Joseph Nye. Mearsheimer is strong proponent of considering American mistake to include China in liberal international order and encourage China be part of interdependent liberal international order and which subsequently capacitated China to become a large economic power. The reason they gave what America had thought by including China, they'll be able to inculcate democratic values in China, and in actual it hasn't really been made a reality, because China is a five-thousand-year-old civilization and that has its values embedded in its discourse through historicity of authoritarianism.



Joseph's book *Is the American Century Over?* reasoned that America's century is far from being over because of America's soft power channels in each international corridor's execution and functionality. China's response to US containment policies, it should have responded aggressively. In case of Taiwan, China has not responded aggressively as the US has anticipated, the reason could be that Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit did not provoke an out large response in offensive capacities from China. What China has achieved was a calculated response in form of three full-fledged military exercises. China's achievement between Saudi Arabia and Iran was an unusual event and its China that bags its credit at diplomatic clouts of what China holds and it is going to play an important role in tying up the two traditional rivals together. Two important facts in American strategy are either you keep on developing good relations with adversaries e.g., Kissinger's style of opening up doors to Soviet Union and secondly, you prevent your smaller and larger adversaries gathering against you as in Bismarck's style of strategy. That room has been filled by China in bringing KSA and Iran closer.

The Russia-Ukraine War will be in favor of China in the long run, the energy crisis in Europe will favor China. As of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD), commonly known as the Quad, is a strategic security dialogue and the AUKUS, a tri-lateral security alignment is based on strategic and military understanding and cooperation. The agreement of exchange of nuclear submarines between USA, UK, and Australia on March 13<sup>th</sup>, it will cost Australian economy of 30 % more of its budget, and GDP will be requisite of producing at 0.15 % every year in next three decades. They are bringing Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean closer because its important area of operation for us interest to contain China by signing significant and foundational agreements GSOMIA 2002, LIMO A 2016, and BECA 2020 to share logistically military capabilities between USA and India



and to contain China in its backyard. All of these developments predict an unavoidable conflict in future where USA enjoys significant top position in its military capacities over Confucianist China.

### Main Takeaways

- Graham Allison's book *Destined for war: can China and United States escape Thucydides's Trap?* He establishes by evaluating twelve incidents from history that the probability of conflict is high between China and USA at any time near in future.
- According to Mearsheimer it was an American mistake to include China in liberal international order because it has not attributed democratic values in its governance system.
- America's century is far from being over because of America's soft power channels in each international institution in its execution and functionality.
- China does not respond aggressively rather through its soft channels and preventive diplomacy.
- China's achievement between Saudi Arabia and Iran was an unusual event and its China that bags its credit at diplomatic clouts of what China holds and it is going to play an important role in bridging the two traditional rivals.
- The Russia-Ukraine War will be in favor of China in the long run, the energy crisis in Europe will favor China.
- Foundational agreements such as GSOMIA 2002, LIMO A 2016, and BECA 2020 to share logistically military capabilities between USA and India and to contain China in its backyard. All of these developments predict an unavoidable conflict in future where USA enjoys significant top position in its military capacities over Confucianist China.



## Speaker Guest:

### **Dr. Ji Deqiang (Online Participation)**

**Professor of International Communication Studies, Communication University of China,  
Beijing**

This conference is important for Pakistan and China to wards generating discourse on community with shared future. BRI is important to understand not just in terms of the benefits that it carries with in inviting investment in infrastructure but also that it links people through communication channels and develop cooperative relations with people of different countries. It has several meanings such as structural which delineates a system in which the factors associated with BRI floats across through CPEC between China and Pakistan as in bilateral cooperation and collaboration.



## Speaker Guest:

**Dr. Mubeen Adnan**

**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

### **Topic of Discussion: Significance of the Belt and Road Initiative for China**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new strategy of China's economic connectivity has emerged in the world. China is one of the global power centers and her emphasis is on the inner strength of China and to expand it into inter-regional as well as on global level. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) serves a number of noticeable China's interests and preferably its economic, political and security gains. It is a great effort of China to develop and expand the interdependent markets. Earlier it was referred to as two separate projects as One Belt and One Road initiative but finally it was declared as the Belt and Road Initiative. "The Silk Road Economic 'Belt' element refers to plans for a revitalized series of ancient overland trading routes connecting Europe and Asia to be built largely with Chinese expertise. The idea was first proposed by Chinese president Xi Jinping during a visit to Kazakhstan in 2013, and central Asia is seen as the most vital region for the 'Belt' element. In 2014 Xi Jinping outlined plans to additionally establish new sea trade infrastructure along the old Marco Polo route – a maritime silk road connecting China, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe. This would be a longer route avoiding the Malacca Strait, incorporating fueling stations, ports, bridges, industry, and infrastructure through Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean. Pakistan is seen as perhaps the most crucial partner country in this effort through the China Pakistan Economic Corridor project."



The BRI is based on integration, economic development, and assimilation. China is showing her global interests of foreign policy in the form of BRI. Her projects are going on in South Asia, South East and Central Asia, Africa and Middle East. This presentation will only focus on what are the aims/goals of the Belt and Road Initiative within China and outside the China?

Following are the domestic goals which China is going to achieve,

1. To remove in equality between the western regions and the eastern provinces. The level of in equality gives a huge challenge to Chinese Communist Party. The BRI projects will address the problems of poor areas of Western provinces of China through the connection with Central Asia in order to enhance economic growth.
2. To provide an out let for Chinese companies' excess construction capacity in infra structure development. It will give business to state owned enterprises for making highways, ports, bridges and power plants in developing countries.
3. To promote President Xi's image of China i.e Chinese dream of becoming a prosperous nation with a global role, often portrayed as building a community of shared destiny.

Following are the global goals which China is trying to achieve,

1. To solve China's Malacca Dilemma and secure China's energy transportation route. Through BRI opening of several alternatives routes of China- Myanmar Economic Corridor, CPEC, Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridors, and all these routes will reduce China's dependence on the Malacca Strait.





2. To extend Political and economic influence of Chinese government in other countries.  
Loans were given to Sri-Lanka and Pakistan for building ports. It will accelerate China's maritime trade across the region.
3. To show off China's soft power diplomacy. BRI is important like US Marshall Plan for Europe. China is providing funding to other states for shared economic interests. BRI is an international leadership initiative for China.
4. For getting global attention, Chinese currency, Yuan has grown faster in countries with BRI projects. China and Pakistan agreed to boost bilateral trade and investment in Chinese Yuan.

It is important to understand that BRI is a long-term plan. Many projects are under the planning phase and will not be completed in the near future. It is too early to determine the success or failure. It is important for China to comply its projects and gain positive global recognition. China still has the potential to make stronger economic and political bonds throughout the globe which will lead towards more Chinese influence in the global economic system.

### **Main Takeaways**

- Pakistan is seen as perhaps the most crucial partner country in this effort through the China Pakistan Economic Corridor project.
- The BRI projects will address the problems of poor areas of Western provinces of China through the connection with Central Asia in order to enhance economic growth.
- It will give business to state owned enterprises for making highways, ports, bridges and power plants in developing countries.



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- BRI routes will reduce China’s dependence on the Malacca Strait.
- To show off China’s soft power diplomacy. BRI is important like US Marshall Plan for Europe. China is providing funding to other states for shared economic interests. BRI is an international leadership initiative for China.



## Speaker Guest:

**Dr. Gulshan Majeed**

**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

### **Topic of Discussion: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Significance and challenges for Pakistan**

Her speech revolved around the concept of significance of CPEC as a business investment to boost friendly relations between China and Pakistan. It elucidated that CPEC consisting of highways, railways and pipelines will connect western China's Xinjiang region to rest of the world through Pakistan's Gwadar port. It will improve the lives of people by building economic cooperation, logistic and people to people contact for regional connectivity. after completion of this corridor, it will become a primary gateway for trade among China, Europe and Middle East. CPEC would shift the power and economic centralization from West to the East. It would change the strategic and economic paradigms in the region in general and make Pakistan an economic and a trade hub in particular. This project is grimed with the geo-economic, geo-strategic, and geo-political benefits for Pakistan.

Through CPEC the government of Pakistan must take initiatives to overcome the energy crisis, increase the power generation capacity and to fulfill the electricity needs of the country. This project should be planned in a way that all the provinces of Pakistan will benefit from infrastructure and energy projects especially Baluchistan, and also through number of employment opportunities to help address the grievances of unemployed youth.



Pakistan's social and political governance is vital for the successful implementation of CPEC. For ensuring political stability in Pakistan it is necessary that various institutions may work within their specific domain. For successful completion and implementation of CPEC project, government should make a transparent mechanism related to CPEC so that it will open a door for maximum local and foreign investment.

Security regarding CPEC project will remain a major challenge for government of China and Pakistan. There is a dire need to evolve mechanism to speed up the process of building infrastructure and to safeguard effectively the route of this corridor from Gwadar to Khunjerab. Militant organization active in that area are trying to destabilize the project. For example the TTP, ISIS, and Lashkar i Jhangvi have been at the front to sabotage the CPEC. The government of Pakistan has launched different operations to curb the activities of different terrorist groups.

The security is crucial. Arranging ten thousand security personnel for the protection of people and infrastructure related to CPEC is not sufficient, there should be taken necessary measures to curb extremism in the areas as an important strategy to counter insurgency, and counter terrorism. Role of USA and India is crucial to break down to their level of strategically crucial partners in this region and a destabilized Afghanistan needs to be prevented from hampering business proliferation of the projects related to CPEC.

### **Main Takeaways**

- CPEC consisting of highways, railways and pipelines will connect western China's Xinjiang region to rest of the world through Pakistan's Gwadar port.



- It should be considered as a project that will improve the lives of people by building economic cooperation, logistic and people to people contact for regional connectivity, therefore, must be kept at the top priority of country to stabilize economy in such a devastating economic deficit faced by Pakistan.
- CPEC would shift the power and economic centralization from West to the East. It would change the strategic and economic paradigms in the region in general and make Pakistan an economic and a trade hub in particular. This project is grimed with the geo-economic, geo-strategic, and geo-political benefits for Pakistan.



## Working Session-2

### Theme: Understanding the Political System of China: Looking into Chinese Governance and Political Functionality (Student Session)

**Presenter:**

**Ms. Laraib Fatima Hassan**

**Member Board of Experts, PRCCSF, Islamabad**

#### **Topic of Discussion: Building A Community with A Shared Future**

This year marks the 10th anniversary when the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind was first proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in March 2013. During his address to the nation, he said “We call on the people of all countries to work together to build a community with shared future for mankind, to build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity. His agenda of building a world towards shared community includes one comprising a world:

- Of lasting peace through dialogue and consultation
- Of common security for all through joint efforts
- Of common prosperity through win-win cooperation
- Which is open and inclusive through exchanges and mutual learning?
- Clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low carbon development

China has proposed five major suggestions to improve the global governance system which will eventually contribute in solving global issues (including the SDGs)



1. Follow the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits;
2. Joint efforts by all countries to cope with non-traditional security threats.
3. Reinforce coordination and cooperation among major countries.
4. Maintain the international law order;
5. And strengthen the role of the UN.

President Xi Jinping has extended a welcoming message to more young people from other countries to come to China, calling upon youth from home and abroad to increase their understanding, build friendship and secure common progress in the process of mutual learning, through scholarships, digital media work, research and engaging in miscellaneous academic and non-academic work.

### **Main Takeaways**

- We call on the people of all countries to work together to build a community with shared future for mankind, to build an open, inclusive, clean, and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity.
- His agenda of building a world towards shared community includes one comprising a world of lasting peace, of common security, of common prosperity through win-win cooperation, Which is open and inclusive, Clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low carbon development.



**Presenter:**

**Mr. Basit Ali**

**Student, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab**

China rises to become a global superpower has been a gradual and complex process following the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The country underwent a period of political instability and economic disparities under Mao leadership. However, beginning in the late 1970s, Deng Xiaoping initiated economic reforms that opened up China's markets to foreign direct investment and trade, leading to unprecedented economic growth and development. This period also saw the consolidation of power within the Chinese Communist Party and the rise of a technocratic elite. The rise of China as major power would bring some opportunities as well as challenges, as the BRI is on the march to different strategic avenues for China in the changing world. China has become a significant global player with its impressive economic growth and increasing military muscle. Its strategy for achieving the goal of becoming a great power is based on the concept of a peaceful rise.

To sustain its position as great power, China has identified some key areas that are crucial for its success. These areas include the South China Sea, East China Sea, Central and South Asia. China has been able to transform from a continental power to sea power by investing and building a blue water navy capability. The South China Sea is one of the most contested areas between China and its neighbors, such as Philippines, and Vietnam. China claims most of the region, which is rich in oil and natural gas reserves, as part of its territory. China has been building artificial islands and military based in South China Sea, which has led to tension with the United States and its allies in the region.





The East China Sea is another area of contention between China and Japan. Both the countries claim the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, which are believed to be rich in oil and gas reserves. China has also increased its military presence in the region, leading to tension between China and the US. Central and South Asia are critical regions for China in terms of strategic interest. China has been investing heavily in infrastructure projects in these regions, such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which connect China's Western region to Pakistan Gwadar port.

To sustain its position as a great power, China has also invested heavily in its naval capabilities. It has been developing advanced naval technologies and building a blue water navy capability to protect its strategic interest. However, China also faces challenges in sustaining its position as a great power. One of the significant challenges is the increased strategic competition between China and the United States. The US views China's rise as a threat to its global position and has been taking measures to counter China's influence. The ongoing trade war between the two countries has also added to the tension.

Another challenge for China is Sino-Indian competition and Indian Ocean security. China has been expanding its presence in the Indian Ocean, which is a critical Sea Lane for global trade. China's investment in the Gwadar port in Pakistan and Hambantota port in Sri Lanka have raised concerns in India, which views these developments as a threat to its strategic interest. The ongoing border disputes between China and India have also led to tensions between the two countries.

China's investment in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Central Asian infrastructure and projects are another strategic avenue needs to be explored. The CPEC connects China's western frontier region to Pakistan Gwadar's port, providing China with access to the Arabian Sea. China's investment in Central Asia aim to improve its energy security and



connectivity with Europe. However, these investments also raise concerns about China's expanding influence in the region and its impact on regional security. China wants to access these market as well as to secure and develop its Xinxiang province.

The Taiwan Strait crises is another significant challenge for China. Taiwan which China claims as its territory, has been seeking closer ties with the US, raising concerns in China about US interference in its internal affairs. China has been increasing its military pressure on Taiwan, with frequent military drills, and the deployment of fighter jets and bombers near Taiwan's airspace. Finally, China also faces domestic challenges, such as maintain social stability and addressing economic inequality. In conclusion China's strategic avenues for sustaining its position as a great power are focused on its investments in key regions such as the South China Sea, East China Sea, and Central Asia. China is on the road to advance its blue water naval capabilities and enhance power projection capabilities to petrol its peripheral waters. However, China also faces challenges from the United States, regional powers such as Russia and India, and domestic issues. It remains to be seen how China will navigate these challenges in the changing world.

### **Main Takeaways**

- The rise of China as major power would bring some opportunities as well as challenges, as the BRI is on the march to different strategic avenues for China in the changing world. China has become a significant global player with its impressive economic growth and increasing military muscle.
- China also faces challenges in sustaining its position as a great power. One of the significant challenges is the increased strategic competition between China and the United States. The



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US views China's rise as a threat to its global position and has been taking measures to counter China's influence.

- Another challenge for China is Sino-Indian competition and Indian Ocean security.



**Ayesha Imtiaz**

**Student, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab**

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Through this theoretical framework , we can analyze see Iran-Saudi-Arab Rapprochement and IR  
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There are many reasons for Iran and Saudi Arab enmity, but few will be highlighted to understand the theoretical lens mentioned above. Saudi Arabia and Iran are two powerful neighbors that are locked in a fierce struggle for regional dominance. The decades-old feud between them is exacerbated by religious differences. They each follow one of the two main branches of Islam. Iran is largely Shia Muslim, while Saudi Arabia sees itself as the leading Sunni Muslim power. In addition to it, proxy wars in Syria, Yemen and the supporting of Houthis rebel and ISIS by Iran is

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to achieve self-interest, utilizing relational circles to facilitate the achievement of instrumental objectives. So, in this case, we can see that China- Iran- Saudi Arab are related and interconnected to each other through BRI and other initiatives of XI Jinping. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a strategy initiated by the People's Republic of China that seeks to connect Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks with the aim of improving regional integration, increasing trade, and stimulating economic growth. The name was coined in 2013 by China's President Xi Jinping, who drew inspiration from the concept of the Silk Road established during the Han Dynasty 2,000 years ago an ancient network of trade routes that connected China to the Mediterranean via Eurasia for centuries. The BRI has also been referred to in the past as 'One Belt One Road'. The BRI comprises a Silk Road Economic Belt which is a trans-continental passage that links China with southeast Asia, south Asia, Central Asia, Russia, and Europe by land and a 21st century Maritime Silk Road, a sea route connecting China's coastal regions with southeast and south Asia, the South Pacific, the Middle East, and Eastern Africa, all the way to Europe. China's proposed initiatives of jointly building the "Silk Road Economic Belt" and the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road", establishing a "1+2+3" cooperation pattern (to take energy cooperation as the core, infrastructure construction and trade and investment facilitation as the two wings, and three high and new tech fields of nuclear energy, space satellite, and new energy as the three breakthroughs), and industrial capacity cooperation, are well received by Arab countries. Moreover, China cannot develop in isolation because the world economy is interconnected. China launched a global development and security initiative which illustrates that all states are equal in security interests. China also believes in collective security as well as an individual security of states and all the security concerns are interlinked with each other. China supports the positive momentum and the efforts of Middle East countries to strengthen dialogue and improve their



relations, accommodate the reasonable security concerns of all parties, and strengthen the internal forces of safeguarding regional security. In addition to it, they jointly safeguard maritime peace and tranquility and sea lane security. So, Iran and Saudi Arab understand that they are interrelated with China and align with it to use BRI as a relational circle to achieve their long and short objectives/goals just like ropes in a net or nerves connected in human body or just like ripples in a lake are interconnected and forming concentric circles.

#### Shared future agreements between Saudi-Arab and China

- In 2016, fourteen agreements and memorandums of understanding were signed between the governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and China, including a memorandum to boost cooperation on the Silk Road Economic Belt, the 21 Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative, and cooperation in a productive capacity.
- Within the framework of cooperation in education several Saudi universities and schools started teaching the Chinese language, and the Arabic language is also being taught in 44 Chinese universities. The second HLJC (High-Level Joint Committee) was held in August 2017 in Riyadh, with another \$70 billion worth of deals signed along with an MoU for a \$20 billion joint investment fund.
- In 2019, the trade value between the two countries was approximately \$71 billion, with the majority consisting of crude oil flows from Saudi Arabia to China. The exports coming out of China were more diversified, with technology, machinery goods, and furniture topping the list. China is Saudi Arabia's largest trading partner.
- During the 2022 visit Chinese President Xi Jinping and Saudi King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud co-signed an agreement on the comprehensive strategic partnership,



accompanied by 34 agreements in several sectors in the fields of green energy, green hydrogen, photovoltaic energy, information technology, cloud services, transportation, logistics, medical industries, housing, and construction factories”.

- In 2022, Saudi Arabia has been the largest recipient of Chinese investments in the BRI, averaging US\$5.5 billion worth of deals.
- One of the largest deals between China and Saudi Arabia on the BRI is that signed between the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) and China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation (Sinopec). According to the MoU, the companies will jointly assess refining and petrochemical integration opportunities; engineering, procurement, and construction; oilfield services, upstream and downstream technologies, and in the areas of carbon capture and hydrogen processes.

#### Shared future agreements between Iran and China

- In March 2021, China and Iran reached a comprehensive cooperation agreement, in which Beijing pledged to invest \$400 billion in Iran in the next 25 years. From January to August 2022, the bilateral trade volume between China and Iran was \$11.16 billion, a year-on-year increase of 19 percent, of which China's exports to Iran were \$6.214 billion, a year-on-year increase of 24 percent, and China's imports were \$4.946 billion, a year-on-year increase of 14 percent. Tehran joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in September 2021 as acting east policy. In 2022, the two sides jointly announced the launch of the implementation of the 25-year comprehensive cooperation plan, agreeing to step up cooperation on energy, infrastructure, production capacity, science and technology, and medical and health care.





- Currently in 2023, the Iranian and Chinese officials inked 20 documents of cooperation and MOUS in various fields including crisis management, tourism, communication and information technology, environment, international trade, intellectual property, agriculture, export, healthcare, media, sports, and cultural heritage.
- Another MOU valued at about \$4.6 billion was inked for the funding of a major irrigation project in southwestern Iran.

Concludingly, the world is experiencing profound and complex changes. Changes in the international configuration and international order are accelerating. All countries in the world are seizing the opportunity to readjust their development strategies, promote reform and innovation, speed up economic transformation, and open new development horizons. Through the Chinese perspective, we can see that the Chinese goal for a shared community and a shared future is not necessarily seen through western international theories. Under the leadership of Xi Jinping, China is trying to work as a fire brigade in the international arena and trying to build a better world based on cooperation, prosperity, and development. He is trying to be applying domestic Chinese philosophy at the international arena. There is a Chinese saying, "Thinking decides the way out". So as a student of international relations, I believe it is necessary for China to communicate to the other parties of the world that their intentions are not hostile, and the world needs to understand the Chinese efforts for a shared future.

### **Main Takeaways:**

- The logic of relationality thus dictates that 'an actor tends to make decisions according to the degrees of intimacy and/or importance of her relationships to specific others'.



- Applying the Zhongyang concept, we can see that how two conflicting parties (Iran-Saudi-Arab) with contradictory relations can coexist which eventually enables the functioning of the relationship (restoration of diplomatic relations) and bringing positive interactions with harmony and avoiding conflict, bilateral talks, by reopening embassies and noninterference in domestic affairs of each other.
- Iran and Saudi Arab understand that they are interrelated with China and align with it to use BRI as a relational circle to achieve their long and short objectives/goals just like ropes in a net or nerves connected in human body or just like ripples in a lake are interconnected and forming concentric circles.
- President Xi Jinping is applying domestic Chinese philosophy at the international arena. There is a Chinese saying, "Thinking decides the way out". So as a student of international relations, I believe it is necessary for China to communicate to the other parties of the world that their intentions are not hostile, and the world needs to understand the Chinese efforts for a shared future.

**Arbab Shabbir**

**Student, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab**

### **Topic of Discussion: Beyond CPEC: Pakistan-China Space and Satellite Cooperation**

With the changing dynamics of world politics, soft power is becoming critical in maintaining the regional and global power structural statuses for states like China, Russia, and the U.S. China is one of the emerging global economies, however, in today's highly technologically advanced multi-



polar world, economy alone cannot win a state the status of a global power. China has developed and continues to form various space and satellite cooperation programs and projects with neighboring Asian, African, and European countries. China has helped Pakistan launch several hallmark satellites such as Badr-I, PRSSI and II, PakTES-1A, and PakSAT-MM1; train personnel; and develop some of the major research and development space science technology centers over the years. Similarly, Pakistan has been a major buyer of China's space technological equipment and one of the first countries to opt for the *BeiDuo* navigation system introduced by China as an alternative to its rival - the United State's Global Positioning System (GPS) in 2013.

China has now become a part of the space race that has long been going on between the U.S. and Russia to maintain its status as an emerging global power. China's political system mainly focuses on a policy of soft power to gain allies and space and satellite cooperation is an excellent opportunity to enable China to gain the status of a regional or global hegemon over the years. According to Kuo, "China's space station will also allow China to present itself as an alternative to the United States – allowing China to claim that it is a more inclusive alternative to the United States, as it will allow both democracies and autocracies alike to participate in its space initiatives." Through its partnership with neighboring countries such as Pakistan, China can better regulate its resources through a satellite system that spread across different regions of the world and allows effective communication, development of a targeted positioning system, environmental monitoring, building an effective defense strategy, land mapping, resource management, infrastructure development, strategic partnership, security and military development, remote sensing, etc.

Based on a cost-benefit analysis, this partnership served as a win-win situation for both countries. Pakistan can gain huge infrastructure development, military, and communication benefits from the



deployment of various satellites into space through a partnership with China, as an American news agency described the importance of one of the satellites Pakistan launched with China's assistance in 2018, saying, "PRSS-1 will meet Pakistan's imagery requirements in the areas of land mapping, agriculture, urban and rural planning, environmental monitoring, natural disaster, and water resource management for socio-economic development in the country." With a neighbor like India that serves as a constant military threat to Pakistan, a geostrategic space partnership and satellite system are extremely important to ensure effective military equipment guidance such as targeting missile systems more accurately and keeping a track of the enemy's movement. Haider, a development analyst states that "space and rocket technology from China would help Pakistan achieve its ambitious goals of economic progress and impregnable defense. . . in return Pakistan could assist China in space by establishing a station on its soil to track Chinese satellites." This signifies the importance of this bilateral relationship for both countries. Besides, Pakistan does not get the technological assistance for space and satellite programs as aid but rather as a loan that must be paid back, however, due to the geostrategic importance of the state and based on friendly relations, China might adopt some soft policies for the return of loans.

China doesn't benefit technologically from Pakistan but Beijing considers space cooperation as an opportunity to expand its soft power." Similarly, Pakistan needs to develop its infrastructure and continue its venture towards space and satellite development if it wants to ensure its survival in the region right next to a strong rival and compete in the region. China-Pakistan space cooperation will help Pakistan in terms of satellite monitoring of natural disasters and agricultural production, land and resources surveying, and waste handling in a microgravity environment."

### **Main Takeaways**



- China has developed and continues to form various space and satellite cooperation programs and projects with neighboring Asian, African, and European countries. China has helped Pakistan launch several hallmark satellites such as Badr-I, PRSSI and II, PakTES-1A, and PakSAT-MM1; train personnel; and develop some of the major research and development space science technology centers over the years.
- China has now become a part of the space race that has long been going on between the U.S. and Russia to maintain its status as an emerging global power. China's political system mainly focuses on a policy of soft power to gain allies and space and satellite cooperation is an excellent opportunity to enable China to gain the status of a regional or global hegemon over the years.
- China-Pakistan space cooperation will help Pakistan in terms of satellite monitoring of natural disasters and agricultural production, land and resources surveying, and waste handling in a microgravity environment."

**Muhammad Ahmad Qasmi**

**Student, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab**

**Topic of Discussion: Comprehending China: Weber's Verstehen**

Before we embark upon a comprehension of the concrete as it relates to China, here is an invite to the abstract as it pertains to China. This brief discourse is an invite to cultivate a cultural and



emphatic understanding of Chinese civilization and social system. It is significant to recall the words of Henry Kissinger, the person who inaugurated Sino-US relations after a hiatus of nearly two decades. There is a need to comprehend “the conceptual way the Chinese think” says Kissinger. “Different histories and cultures produce occasionally divergent conclusions” (Kissinger, 2011) “China is”, he says, “singular. No other country can claim so long a continuous civilization or such an intimate link with the past”. For Fukuyama, China “built a modern state (as we understand it today)... at the time of Qin unification in 211 BC.” “This,” Fukuyama says, “meant that China beat Europe in this aspect by some 1800 years. (Fukuyama, 2014)

It is both astonishing and instructive to note that whenever Kissinger writes a discourse on China, he prefaces it with a foray into its rich cultural legacy and history. Almost one-sixth of his book ‘On China’ is devoted to giving a cultural and historical background of China. Historicity, cultural complexities and social sensibilities define a civilization. And without any understanding of the philosophical beliefs and cultural values underpinning the actions of the other, whether it be nation or a person, our understanding of, and relations with, the other remains superficial. Humans are value-driven creatures, culture creating creatures. Thus, the need for delving into the historical sociology of China, in a Weberian tradition is perhaps equally important as is a study of its political system, constitutions and institutions.

Especially relevant in this regard the Weberian concept *Verstehen*. *Verstehen* could roughly be translated as “interpretive understanding” or “emphatic understanding” so to speak. In anthropological studies, *Verstehen* has come to mean a systematic interpretive process in which an outside observer of a culture attempts to relate to it and understand others. *Verstehen* refers to understanding the meaning of action from the actor's point of view. It means, simply, entering into



the shoes of the other. It provides a way to allow us to change lenses and try to make them align with the lens of another person, to see things from their worldview. Here is an invitation to go beneath the surface and beyond the horizon, to try to see China how China sees it, to see the world as China sees it.

The Swiss psychologist Carl G Jung thought that whatever the immediate problems on the international stage, what was really significant occurred at a more fundamental level. So the solution lies in 'looking beneath the concrete institutions to the psychological gestalt that underpinned them.

Let's conceptualize it this way There is this Confucian canvass, upon which got impressed imprints of different hues and colors, from different time periods. Upon the Confucian canvass was imprinted the legacy of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Xi Jinping. What emerges is this colorful canvass, with shades of modernity and antiquity. China now defines itself, in its constitution, as a 'Socialist Republic' and a 'democratic dictatorship' symbolizing a blending of the ancient and the modern, the indigenous and the global. The adaptation of, and improvisation upon, its ancient civilization characteristics has given China a dynamic durability. Yet, its system, in spite of incorporating these variegated elements, retains a distinctive Chinese character. The Chinese system is, therefore, unique in this aspect.

It aims at promoting growth at the local level, while simultaneously maintaining the ability to take long-term decisions relatively quickly, with a unique blend of political centralization and decentralization of economic power and responsibility, that is conducive to central guidance and local business development. A unique blending of political centralization with economic and administrative decentralization is another distinctive feature of the Chinese governance system. Xu



has described the system as ‘regionally decentralized authoritarianism’, in contrast with most authoritarian systems that are highly centralized. China is also credited with inaugurating the first civil service examination system in history; thus the principle of meritocracy prevails. Upward mobility along the bureaucratic hierarchy was, even in ancient China, determined by achievement, rather than ascription. In this sense, China was modern, before the concept of modern state developed in the West. Their career prospects and promotion depend on how well the local economy performs. This works better than in, for example, democratic India's top administrative system, where promotion is based more on seniority than on performance.

“From Chinese point of view, the nature of the state, including its legitimacy, has to be defined by its substance, that is good governance, competent leadership and success in meeting the people’s needs” (Zhang Weiwei). Thus, Chinese system is grounded in the concept of performance legitimacy or output legitimacy. It is the interactions between global - mainly Western – forces and the Chinese cultural traditions that constitute the dynamism for the development of contemporary China. In their interactions, global forces become localized :hence “socialism with Chinese characteristics” or, for that matter, market economy with Chinese characteristics is what makes China stand out.

### **Main Takeaways**

- There is a need to comprehend “the conceptual way the Chinese think, says Kissinger.
- For Fukuyama, China “built a modern state (as we understand it today)... at the time of Qin unification in 211 BC.” “This,” Fukuyama says, “meant that China beat Europe in this aspect by some 1800 years.





- Without any understanding of the philosophical beliefs and cultural values underpinning the actions of the other, whether it be nation or a person, our understanding of, and relations with, the other remains superficial.
- Humans are value-driven creatures, culture creating creatures. Thus, the need for delving into the historical sociology of China, in a Weberian tradition is perhaps equally important as is a study of its political system, constitutions and institutions.
- There is this Confucian canvass, upon which got impressed imprints of different hues and colors, from different time periods. Upon the Confucian canvass was imprinted the legacy of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Xi Jinping. What emerges is this colorful canvass, with shades of modernity and antiquity. China now defines itself, in its constitution, as a 'Socialist Republic' and a 'democratic dictatorship' symbolizing a blending of the ancient and the modern, the indigenous and the global.



### Concluding Session-3:

#### **Theme: The Strategic Avenues for China in the Changing World & China's New Silk Route: Exploring the Future for Global Connectivity**

#### **Speaker Guest:**

**Dr. Mehboob Hussain**

**Department of History, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

His talk was based on three aspects, China's governance model, regional connectivity and Pakistan's role. On understanding China: looking beyond the horizon, he said that People's Republic of China has initiated one of his most landmark global initiative in community and global community for shared future. I just referred the speech of the Chinese Prime Minister, on the occasion of 14th National People's Congress began at 5<sup>th</sup> of March in this month, the great Awami Hall in China, with party leaders, with state leaders, and attending some other prominent figures in China, he just mentioned the future goals of China. I just mentioned his salient features.

Number one, he said the main projected growth targets for this year in GDP is expected to grow by about five percent. He mentioned about 12 million new urban jobs will be created. The celebrate Urban unemployment rate will be about 5.5%, so it should be reduced within a short span of time. The income growth and economic growth are essentially compatible and imports and exports will be boasted. In energy sector, he said, energy consumption and the quality of the biological environment will continue to improve. He mentioned about science and technology policies should focus on improving self-reliance and development, more employment opportunities will be provided for the youth especially the colleges graduates. At the basic their basic daily life should be improved. Similarly, in the governmental work report by Prime Minister pointed out that the construction of a modern industrial system should be accelerated. So, these



are some basic points which Chinese PM has mentioned in his presidential address in this conference.

Second point is about the regional connectivity and the role of BRI. He said, trade routes have played an important role in promoting prosperity at the regional and extra-regional levels. They served like pathways, nourishing political, economic, and social interactions between the societies falling in their range. The trade routes created more corporation than conflicts. So, silk route and ancient silk route linkages China with the west and carried goods and ideas between the two great civilizations of Rome and China. The routes of the phenomenal story of deep in history in an age when means of communications were poor and trade routes were dangerous and invariably difficult, they served an important purpose like bringing civilizations closer to each other. So cultural and trade exchange was cultivated along with the old silk route with the trades of the South Asia, and areas of Central Asia.

The third point is the CPEC, reviving of Silk Road. The initiative includes the new silk route which will link China with Europe through Central Asia and maritime Silk Route to ensure a safe passage of China's shipping through the Indian Ocean and the South Asian Sea. So revisiting linkages between South Asia and Central Asia is beneficial for both the regions.

#### Pakistan's position

Pakistan is situated at the convergence of three geoeconomically significant regions of South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia. It offers shortest route to the sea for all landlocked countries of Central Asia alongside with the western China. So, Pakistan as a rapidly emerging connection for several corridors' cooperation among all three regions in the fields of energy, in the field of trade in the field of transportation and tourism.



Lastly, Countries in the region, should stick to openness and inclusive and uphold the spirit of partnership by creating powerful synergy for connectivity. They should jointly contribute and share benefits to create a bright Future of integrated development with all parties and built, all the menstrual multi-layered and sustainable connectivity network. If we talk about the mutual cooperation, Punjab University has already established some linkages between our Chinese counterpart, for example, department of history signed a MOU with Chinese university every year. 15 Chinese students came here and doing PHDs on different joint projects the common interest of both the countries. So, Punjab university similarly established the regional integration center, offering digital cooperation between the countries of the region. So, I hope for a positive output. I do hope that the proceeding of this conference will submit very useful results. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- If we understand the China's governance model, they made their goals according to their policies. If their industry on progress in working then jobs automatically created. So about 12 million new urban jobs will be created.
- This is the science of history that the trade routes created more cooperation than conflicts. So, these trades routes presented and interpret network of corridors on lands and sea. The BRI is a large project aiming at improving regional cooperation through better connectivity among countries lying on the ancient silk route and beyond.
- China has an interest in buildings stronger relations with the neighboring countries. The scale of investment Beijing is currently discussing, would have an immensely positive impact on the number of underdeveloped economies like Pakistan.



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- Technology has made possible to overcome the difficulties and look forward for immutable cooperation.



## **Dr. Muhammad Shareh Qazi**

### **Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

He started off with three discussions that were very crucial. He said, we've extensively talked about how China is opening up and how this opening up is peaceful in its collective construction but then we rewind, whatever we are doing and we come out to these new rapprochements that China is making the most recent one, being the inclusivity of Chinese third-party mediation between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Now I do not wish to be the skeptic in the room and I do not wish to offer extensive criticism, but when we are discussing things from a strategic lens, when we're talking about things from a security standpoint, we're looking into politics of some states that do not share common ground on ideology or on basis of discourse between states whether that discourse is economic, political or security, we need to find out certain caveats, which can be a problem in the future. I realize, just as we were sick of the Petro dollar which again was this recycling of dollar currency from oil exchange, we might look into a Petro yuan in the future. Because as of 2015, China is aggressively being pursuing a policy of internationalization of its currency and mediating between two of the largest oil repositories within the planet and then mediating extensively and aggressively. In the backdrop, the Saudi Arabia in 2016 initiated this willingness to change the way in which it deals with oil exchange, the change being switching the dollar to Yuan something that worries people like us who are obviously net importers of oil.

The second is this current and very recent yet very aggressive confrontation between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China. From a military blockade at Taiwan to Nancy Pelosi's aggressive visit albeit being told not to, the entire fiasco of this Chinese spy balloon circling over the United States of America and Canada prospectively being shot down, the whole issue of satellite blindness on Middle East into 2015 and the cyber security infrastructure of



critical infrastructure security that is a big issue in contemporary debate. So, one comes to think, will China act as a different global stakeholder as we would perceive it to be or would it be following the steps of the United States of America. And if that is the case, how would Pakistan's position as a strategic partner to the people's republic of China, the strategic entanglement between Beijing and Washington DC pan out in the coming years. Now, when you look at all of this conversation, into the backdrop of the China Pakistan economic corridor, the entire debt trapping that has been circulating around within the western literature that is being prolifically produced. The one issue that I find as a researcher is that we still look at China from the cold war lens. So if we were to rank China as the superpower, we would like to rank China as a superpower in context of the definition of the term superpower, the context of the term superpower as it comes from the cold war. So, if China fulfills all those criteria, then obviously China would be a superpower and we would be more than welcoming and very happy to indulge. But if China deviates, even a step out of it and starts setting its own criteria, start setting its own dimensions, starts putting out its own policy pathways in which it thinks a super power must work in the 21st century, then I think we and the international community stand to have a problem.

Now, how do you address the problem? I think there are four ways you could address that. the intellectual exchange of conversation between Pakistan and China is fairly limited. We understand that there is this strategic connectivity between two states, but that's strategic connectivity is not boiling down to the grassroots. Now, this initiative that we have today, the conversations we're having today are just the tip of the iceberg but unfortunately that is the only part of the iceberg left in our disposal. The lack of discourse analysis for the lack of frequency of conversation without Chinese counterparts is something that puts these question marks rather bigger. The shadow that these question marks are casting out is rather big.



The second is to understand that when you are talking about strategic partnership in the 21st century, a strategic partnership is a two-way process. It's not the block politics of the cold war era, where you would have to bandwagon behind a certain superpower and then that's superpower is going to take responsibility of your growth because it is going to, obviously, help you grow, so that you can defend its interests. 21st century power politics doesn't work that way, and it's not supposed to. If you're going to have a strategic partnership, you're supposed to understand that this strategic partnership is all encompassing or none at all. If there is this dilemma in Pakistan, that China-Pakistan economic corridor is a security only paradigm, or an economy only paradigm or a politics only paradigm, this paradigm would not take you far enough in this strategic partnership.

Agenda number three is that while these regional entities are battling with one another, wrestling with one another, they actually trying to indicate that they understand the threats and vulnerabilities that are being caused by non-state entities. Now, China would not like to talk about the non-state entities at length but not at this moment. But prospectively, let's say 10 to 20 years down the line, China would definitely have this on its plate. If you're prepared to understand how the known traditional realm works and you are ready to tackle that within a strategic paradigm within a strategic partnership mix, you're supposed to look at it holistically and not pick your own choice of poison and then run with it. It's not going to work that way.

The fourth issue is that the complacency, we expect a super over to deliver if and when China does declare itself to be one, is not the kind of complacency we will be dealing with the Soviet Union and the United States of America. So just because we do not understand the Chinese political system, just because it does not fit the canvas that we had seen over the last hundred years, does not necessarily mean that China is a new entrant that we should understand first and then interact with. But it also does not mean that China is old, never before seen in the history of political





maneuvering on the state canvas. It means that there is this junction or this fault line in between that where China was there, still is, does not want to introduce itself as such because it's not the right time right now, maybe it's not the right kind of atmosphere right now, maybe they're not being offered the same dividends as of now, but in that mix, we need to understand that China is an entity. So be it you talk about the silk road, be it to talk about the BRI, be it to talk about state connectivity, digital integration, these four principles are the ones that I feel are important for us to consider whilst having these conversations.

### **Main Takeaways**

- Petro dollar has been a big issue, would Petro Yuan be the same? This is one question that we need to have in our minds when we are talking about strategic connectivity in partnership.
- There are ways to address issues regarding discourse analysis, strategic partnership, non-state entities and complacency.
- We need to understand that China is an entity, we need to interact with based on a holistic approach of how we think a superpower must be in the 21st century. So, one's definition of a superpower is more important than any established definition of a superpower.



**Dr. Hassan Masood**  
**Govt. College University**

He said, China in the last three decades have achieved so much especially in terms of economic and financial areas that it has become a lot more assertive. Its assertion is causing difficulties for it, for example, the defining of the nine-dash line in the South China Sea, the establishment of seven artificial islands in the South China Sea, and some of them trying to play a major role in conflict management, or conflict resolution, and then probably it's involvement in the building of the Gwadar port on the mouth of the Gulf of Oman is also an irritant. It's an involvement in transferring the missile and nuclear technologies to a quite a few states is also been considered an irritant. Now keeping in this view, I had identified some features of Chinese regarding their approach to domestic affairs, and their approach to international affairs, which is a part of this write-up.

There was a variety of strategic avenues available to China, investment first. For example, Pakistan can offer them port, a trade and energy corridor in return of China's investment. Similarly, it is offering 400 billion dollars investment to Iran in 25 years and that investment will be in the oil and gas sectors and as obviously the construction of rail roads and highways in the region is also very important for the Chinese objectives in the area. If a Chinese Pakistan created an energy corridor materializes, it can add to energy, security efforts of China, provided with the shorter access to radiant scene, markets of Iran, the Middle East, and beyond. For Pakistan, new opportunities of export manufacturing and income from trade and energy transit. China may also be interested in developing a trade and alternate trade and energy route through corridor of Afghanistan culminating into the port of Chabahar in Iran. The sign of one alternate connectivity route will be seriously pursued if the present phase of instability and unpredictability and



contradictions prolong in Pakistan. However, there can be quantum shift in the Chinese distancing, if there is a change in the government setup in the country. Chinese investment and presence in Gwadar port in Pakistan is also very difficult to swallow for powers whose oil supplies coming out of the Persian Gulf, strait of Hormoz and Gulf of Oman.

Another avenue which is available to Iran is China's industrial modernization, and development, in which it has spent out as its objective. Presently, the world including China witnessing a keen interest among all manufacturing involving circuits and batteries in securing the continuous supply of raw materials used in the type of manufacturing like the rare earth metals like lithium etc. because at present China is manufacturing approximately 80% of electrical batteries for the new energy vehicles. Similarly, there are other rare earth metals which are being major Chinese exports, if these are severed as a major bargaining chip in their negotiations with the industrial advanced countries, any stoppage could cause a long and serious disruption in the manufacturing process of the electronic devices and even the motor vehicle chips. While on the other hand, there can also be an interstate conflicts for physical control of the supplies.

Another avenue is the energy security. China being in the midst of a rapid industrialization and development is a very high energy consuming gone economy. It uses a mix of hydra, coal, oil and gas nuclear and renewable energy resources to maintain energy needs regarding to the supply for fossil fuels. China like all, industrialized countries have diversified its supply routes like pipelines from Russia and through Kazakhstan from the Turkmenistan to Central Asian countries. And also intend to build a supply through Pakistan's trade and energy corridor apart from its supplies through the sea.

Then another strategic avenue is education abroad. Huge number of Chinese students have enrolled themselves in universities and higher education institutions securing training in a variety



of high technology fields like robotics, artificial intelligence. They are not only contributing to the industrialization and modernization of their country but also a source of attracting international students by substantially raising their standard of similar Chinese institutions and thus a source of earning for China.

Another avenue is the buying of overseas assets, according to a report, China have already bought the biggest British asset, the greatest deal a few years ago, the United States had floated an international tender for the sale of Unicoal as its oil joint. As a response, the Chinese state hold oil company happen to buy the American oil company, but the American government intervened and stopped the sale on the plea that the company is a strategic American asset and therefore that cannot be sold to China. Finalization of such sales will expose the Chinese to new advanced techniques and procedures for the management of large companies and at the same time, latest technologies and extraction and refining.

Then are the partnerships for peace and development. The administration of President Xi Jinping is focusing on forging stable and long-term partnerships with countries like Russia with which China is already formalized the strategic partnership with the region like Asia, Africa, Latin America and BRICS. This identification of different areas regarding the Chinese international policy has also been discussed in the sources.

In 2013 this document of the Chinese government spread over three continents and 147 and worth 147 high income countries. The spending is around 1 trillion US dollars. Through this plan, the China has accepted the challenges with might emerge for its maritime trading times of hostilities like the strait of Malacca. Most specifically, it has added the American and allied naval power was overwhelming in the specific ocean capable of disrupting Chinese maritime trade. Thus, it announced a plan of overland trade between OBOR member countries as an alternate route to



the maritime trade. On this, countries are extremely uncomfortable because they have invested heavily in the naval forces over the years therefore, the plan faces sabotage in the form of regime changes in the countries where the governments are committed to the end of implementation in the change of policies on armed attacks on the workers etc.

China has initiated an extensive program of military modernization. Its annual budget spending is in terms of years dollars has reached 260 billion years dollars into 2022. Second highest after the US which alone allocated 860 billion US dollars in 2022. The allied countries are busy propagating Chinese military buildup as the threat to international security.

Then the last one is changing nature of the challenges. From the beginning, the US and their allied powers viewed Chinese policy of maximum openness and monetization as an opportunity to usher in a complete change of Chinese political outlook. This was hoped to be accomplished through a massive inflow of American and European capital, which would transform it to a capitalist economy. That in turn would generate pressures, which would facilitate transition to liberal democracy. However, the Chinese leadership's vision on the subject was completely different. They firmly sought an economic rejuvenation devoid of any political transformation. Thus, the US especially the allied powers have failed to change China politically by initiating decoupling with China. It gained momentum during the administration of President Trump and it is continuing during the present American administration turning away from the cooperation in economic growth to the use of armed twisting and coercive tactics against it. Again, for that purpose of variety of measures and initiatives, a spearheading establishment of anti-China military coalitions like QUAD, AUKUS etc. which China takes as encirclement.

Finally, he concluded by saying that Chinese leadership's optimism is example as it knows the art of turning or transforming challenges into opportunities like the initiative of OBOR as an



overland trade route and times of difficulties in maritime trade. It just does not need to get agitated over the high-level US visits to Taiwan and get irritated to initiate military measures and get itself stuck in a war of attrition like the one Russian is involved into. Instead, it needs to maintain its traditional composition and continue its peaceful efforts to rise as a prosperous power of the world.

### **Main Takeaways**

- There was a variety of strategic avenues available to China like investment, industrial modernization and development, energy security, education abroad, artificial intelligence, buying of overseas assets, and military modernization etc.
- China offers strategic investment to states but there is a very important thing about that it offers this strategic investment to states which are able to offer something in return.
- China is involved in high technology developing and industrial manufacturing. Presently, this also may be an irritant for the international powers which matter.
- Chinese leadership view is that China has no hegemonic ambitions, military occupations etc. They support their view with the contention that they themselves have exceptional experience of occupation and they have strictly followed the principles of peaceful coexistence.



**Dr. Mariam Kamal**

**Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

China's new silk route, exploring the future of global connectivity. Coming to the China's new silk route, if we start from some historical background about silk route, it was very interesting. The first thing which came to mind last year when I visited Gilgit, both roads, the old traditional one which was on the other side of the river and the new one was going parallel that was the beauty and historically also Gilgit was one of routes for the traditional silk route at that time. This is something not new though and not falls into the area claim by India against the CPEC but traditionally it was part of the old Silk Road. So, the ancient trade route that once ran between China and the West during the days of the Roman Empire, it's how oriental silk first made it to Europe. It also the reason China is no stranger to carrots. The patron, idea behind the silk route or this digital connectivity is the same. At that time, it was the silk which was used to go from China to Europe and according to some other sources it was not the silk itself, it was jade and something people called it Jade route as well. However, there's so many things which basically went from China to Europe and Europe was very against and were envious because of this China's trade routes, this is something the US response or other Western global responses against China's. BRI is something not new again, at that time the business and emperor send a spy from Constantinople to China through the Silk Road, to just get the information about how they are making silk at that time and they stole the self-warm from China and brought it to Europe and they started manufacturing silk. Though the quality of the manufactured silk in China was much better from the Europe at that time. So, this is how thing basically evolved. It is embedded in the historical narrative of a China, what is BRI or this regional connectivity. It's also the reason China is no stranger to this route, to this economic connectivity.



Coming to the China's policy, within current scenario, what is different, what US offering to global world or what China is about to offer. US to a great extent grounded on the security blanket, it offered to its allies, US relationship with its allies at that global level, it's more about security perspective but what China is offering is instead geopolitically. China decided a long time ago that security was too expensive and offer to make instead the new superpower may offer connectivity. So, this is the alternative what China is offering against the security perspective of the west and connectivity that's why we talk about peaceful rise of China because China is talking about the connectivity perspective and that is not new for definitely. We understand that economic trade rules are basically part of our structures and interesting thing is BRI, that it is not simply a land route, it's basically connectivity through land which is again diverted towards north towards Iran, and south towards Pakistan.

Then there is a maritime silk route and there is a third one, there is a digitalized silk road. Basically, they created a web around all the Asians, South Asians, North, Central Asians and European states, reaching to Germany, or reaching to Italy through water. If you look from the US perspective, it is threatening for them. I can relate this to rise and fall philosophy of Ibn-Khaldun when he talks about rise and fall of civilizations, and this is basically how one civilization overrides the other one through a new idea, new perspective and this book of geopolitics of emotion when he said that the 20th century was century of US and century of ideology and the 21st century is century of China and century of identity, so China is more about identity. not ideology. If it is combined with the enhance globally connectivity, China's enormous gravity could become and even more meaningful engine for the global economy so definitely it's a web which is influencing or will be influencing the global economy. China has proactive approach as 2014 is often offered to as a key milestone as it is a year when the hundred anniversary of the establishment of the





Republic of China will be celebrated. They have a vision to 2049 when they recelbrate the hundred anniversary of China, their policy has a proactive approach towards what exactly they want to do. This is kind of visionary leadership.

Then they have economic strategy which talks about and can be regarded as a most important driver for China's long-term development strategy. Foreign policy and in opinion of some, way to reform the structure of its own economy, it meant to shape both as national economic development strategy and international activities. They are operating on two sides whether it's internal dimension and external dimension. When we talk about the internal dimension, we can see within China, there is around sixteen provinces out of 27 province which are covered by this project. It's a cumulative effort, which is engaging the internal provinces as well and the external whether the external connectivity policy, the geographically area that is the potentially covered by the BIR initiative is vast in its current shape, the initiative has close to 65 countries. This is the horizontal dimensional of new silk road, which talks about the proactive approach and internal external dimensions. If we look at the vertical drivers, which is shaping the future regional connectivity, we can see that there are trade and transport connectivity, ICT is enabled and driver of growth, growth, trade and service, energy and connectivity and security responding to population dynamics and transition to knowledge base economies. Every state in this era wants economic prosperity and they're looking for such key drivers to reshape their economy and for productive regional connectivity.

However, South Asia is in regional integration, looking at the South Asian perspective, it is the one of the least integrated regions in the world. We know that the political issues they inherited territorial issues and leadership crisis that they are not willing for regional integration. And despite geographically, candidly share of the integrational trade in South Asian countries,



total trade remains marginal at around only 5%. So, what we need to concentrate on, how to improve, how to respond and what is our role to respond towards these projects? So, government must take the lead in establishing robust institutional framework. We need a collective work, collective frame of work, need to continue in policies, to plan and implement the regional connectivity agenda.

Government to reach across sectoral boundaries to develop across sectoral policies, both at the national and regional level and to develop a shade understanding of trends issues, bottlenecks, which is fundamental for building consensus on cross border issues, such as trade, labor, mobility immigration, educational qualification, transport and tourism. It's not about just signing that project and it will begin changing for us; No, it's not in that way, adequate response is needed.

Definitely, historical silk route emerges originally more than 2,000 years so, it belongs to China. No other state can make it and something by default embedded in their structure in their nature the economic priority and unfortunately if we look at South Asia region, we are more stuck into the religious ideologies. Due to increasing foreign demand for Chinese silk at that time, 2000 years ago, another propaganda was made that the label of immorality was linked to wearing a silk. Roman Empire labeled that the woman who are wearing a Chinese say, they're immoral. These things are not new for China regarding the BRI, when the US or the Western power going against it. Thus, the development of the routes and corridors currently being envisioned in a very much driven by China itself again. It's China's projects, China will lead it. Definitely, they are very clear about the structure. Now what the thing is that we need to be clear about how to respond to the project. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**



- Basically, this silk route or the new silk route, by default it's embedded in the history of China. It is something belongs to them. It's part of their tradition, part of their history, part of them, this is something not new for them, but if there's a little bit difference with technology and the evolution of the time and things have been definitely changed a lot in terms of technology.
- If we look at the horizontal dimension of the new silk route, there is a kind of proactive approach. Comparatively China's policies with Pakistan, the Pakistan is still stuck in this traditional dilemma and policies are more reactionary than proactive.
- The main driving force behind regional connectivity is the political will of the national government.
- We need to respond according to need of BRI project in terms of governments will, in terms of our policies, in terms of institutional support and whatever is needed for the project.



**Dr. Zille Huma**

**Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore**

She started her presentation with explanation of two important concepts, which I'll be employing in my later discussion of the presentation.

1. The strategic narratives and
2. The ontological security of states.

I will then link these concepts with the case of China to see what is new in these strategic avenues in the changing world, where China is maneuvering or will be maneuvering in the future. So, I like to highlight rule of certain deliberately constructed narratives in creating political spaces in with certain foreign policy decisions of state acquired meaning and began legitimacy. These strategic narratives if emerged as powerful and persuasive, they have the tendency to replace the existing powerful narratives discourses and based on the scope and breadth of their adoption across border, strong narratives reveal general shapes in existing international or regional orders. Now, what is interesting to be highlighted here is how the eyes of China, especially in the context of belt and road initiative, is providing China of potential of systematically building a global network of influence, using the power of narratives to shape policy outcomes across different regions.

Within strategic narratives, stories of different events are reaped in a way that makes certain policy choices more legitimate to be adopted over others. While you are going for certain foreign policy choices that could be getting some justification from how the states see themselves, how the state identifies themselves, and how the state situates themselves in the international arena. Where strategic narratives must appear to material and rational incentives, they also reflect the myths that constitute collective identities adding to the ontological security of a state. International behavior of states reflects not just that desire for physical security, which most of the times being



students of international relations are we are obsessed with, but also the contour design for ontological security to maintain a consistent senses of self. Consistent sense of self is the requirement too and it is the requirement over the period of time as the state evolves in the changing world.

The narratives revolving around the material gains only and creating an ontological insecurity for states are likely to be discontinued. On the other hand, the narratives which correspond well with the material incentives, which ensure material incentives and which are also adding to the ontological security of state, they are meant to be not only generated agreements, but they are also meant to become prominent over the period of time.

Now, linking this with the case of China, I'll elaborate this while referring to the two important cases of strategic narratives to understand the production, the dissemination and reception of these narratives as is done by China.

One is the narrative of a new silk route and that narrative is intertwined with China as a civilizational state, and the other one is the narrative devolving around anti-imperialism, anti-hegemony and that also revolves around the narrative of othering, how China presents the other and itself against that other. All of these narratives are to convince the audience of BRI project serving as a productive platform for building international partnerships. The reference to silk road also acts as a lens through which the scale and depth of China's cultural fast gets zoomed in. Historical narratives around ancient silk route and ancient maritime silk route embody the economic vitality, interregional connectedness and openness in non-western world before the advent of European expansionism.

So, while referring to that ancient silk road and China's position within that, very systematically the seven voyages, it is cited from the first half of the 15th century to illuminate the



spirit of silk road that China is trying to revive today through multilateral corporation and trade. Belt and road is creating the material conditions for a new way of imagining Asia, talking about the forgotten things, the forgotten region, the forgotten economic vitality of these regions and it corresponds very well with not only China but also the rest of the region.

The second narrative, it revolves around China's harsh treatment by the Imperial powers, Britain, Japan and USA, to name a few but it's also general anti-imperialistic stand position. The narrative revolves around the events spread across the century of humiliation roughly from 1839 to 1949 from the first opium water till the birth of People's Republic of China. The narratives revolving around anti-imperialism provides platform to China disparaging the manipulation by today's developed world in the form of new imperialistic policies as we see China is vocal regarding the rights of developing states in WTO. Once it's rating itself as against any points of manipulation, China could raise itself as a non-hegemonic state emphasizing the ghouls of mutual development, major respect, and the principle of non-intervention. In this way, a true social identity of journalism non-western power and as a developing country is constructed inter-subjectively against the creation of another. while endorsing the its positions, China refrains from and discourages preaching and the forceful of the ideologies of the states.

So just to sum it up, as Pakistanis, we have experienced how China and BRI project was demonized during period of time and we were always assisting it with our predatory project, debt trapping project. So those counter narratives are regularly being produced as well and it depends on which the narratives stand, resilient and it comes down to what they are offering to the international audience and what they are offering to the other states from different regions. When it comes to the narratives and the counter-narratives, 140 plus countries have already got involved in BRI, they have signed some sort of memorandum of understanding in BRI and it reveals the



wider acceptance by the states, regarding China as providing them and unmatched opportunity to grow, but the involvement and commitment to BRI varies along different partners, depending upon how well they receive the strategic narratives produced by China.

Lastly, to understand that cyclical process of production, dissemination reception and acceptance of the strategic narratives, the context matters. Today's context in which China is offering these narratives to the world, this is a world where western new liberal ideas and institutions are struggling at the hands of the best itself. Dysfunctionality of WTO dispute settlement mechanism due to USA's known readiness to appoint the permanent members of its appellate body, reluctance and joining promising projects, like transpacific partnership and the inability to work any such deal as China did recently between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It provides a vacuum conducting enough for the absorption of alternative narratives in this changing world order. On the other hand, China is assuming a relatively active role in promoting interdependence and global governance, is putting a clear challenge to the states who's got legitimization from the very structures which are getting shaky today. I would suggest China has a great potential in tweaking the contemporary international power landscape, once the power of communication and digital world is fully realized.

### **Main Takeaways**

- Narratives are deliberately constructed which gives them some sense of what they are. Those strategic narratives are very carefully calculated, produced and projected for the domestic audience and for the international audience.
- An ontological security basically is the state security of being, without a stable sense of self. Over time, states are thought unable to exert agency effectively since it provides a guide to how a state should add in a changing world.



- BRI is not only offering material incentives to these regions, it is also aligning well with their ontological security, with their sense of being, with their sense of where do they stand in this changing world.
- We need to understand that all this is at play while simultaneously counter-narratives are being produced. It doesn't mean that one state is producing narratives and there is some space where they are freely maneuvering, counter narratives are being produced as well.
- We are not sure about exactly how long will China take to realize the full potential of its narrative and its geo-cultural power and in vicious belt and road suggests it as ascendant nature. We need to comprehend those narratives do not really reflect the realities of period but narratives actually actively contribute in establishing a certain reality. Success of China will be getting determined by the full realization of this opportunity and in an era where powers increasingly accumulated by building connectivity across multiple sectors.





## **Dr. Fauzia Hadi Ali**

### **Director Regional Integration Centre, University of the Punjab, Lahore.**

She held that questions normally arises whenever we talk about BRI and CPEC, what is the kind of impact it would put on the environmental social and governance thing because the sky's we have, have no boundaries and when it comes to industries and the smoke that comes out of those industries and manufacturing concerns, that concern a lot of people and there's a lot of counter narrative developed on that as well. In order to understand that there's a sustainability development index, which is sustainability development goals 2030 and where China stands at the 56th number and Pakistan stands at the 125th number. You can identify the kind of things that we are lagging behind and we should not talk about what are the counter issues when it comes to CPEC and whether it will be beneficial for Pakistan or not? But of course, when there are questions arising, then we have to look into some statistics also. There's just one side of me that I have identified here and it gives a comparison of all the 17 goals of the sustainability development goals and they talk about poverty, zero hunger, good health, and well-being and so on and so forth. And since I've been like too much connected into the research, in my domain and businesses, as far as whether the companies are disclosing the environmental aspects or the social aspects or the governmental aspects in annual reports. This is a position of Pakistan till 2022 and with respect to Pakistan, there is no change when it comes to poverty alleviation, the things are the same. When it comes to zero hunger, the issue is very grave in Pakistan. This is where BRI and CPEC could actually help us to eliminate the poverty that we are talking about maybe just through different industries. We could have more employability and employment which could actually add on, but still, it's a myth till the time it is really implemented in a full proximity. Then when it comes to the quality education, big stories about quality education of Pakistan in US ranking of this level and



that are being heard but still when it comes to quality education, Pakistan lags behind. When it comes to clean water and sanitation that's a very big challenge for Pakistan. Although China is also still striving that but it's better off. When it comes to our sanitation systems and clean water, Pakistan being deficient in water resources so we have to identify whatever the projects that would be coming up to CPEC or BRI, whether they'll be able to use lesser of the water resources or not. So that is again a question to ponder upon.

Then when it comes to there are certain things that are really good for Pakistan for example responsible consumption and production in climate action. But you know, for climate there is a lot of problems who say that it's not Pakistan who is polluting, it's the neighboring countries who are polluting because they have more industries and Pakistan is the victim. But even then, if it's a victim what will happen when CPEC or BRI would come into play? Because as I said, we have no boundaries in the skies and the smoke or any other issues might have the same repercussions as the other countries might have. It's a global issue and it requires global governance systems to be intact to identify management issues and more. Thank you very much.

### **Main Takeaways**

- With every issue, there is an opportunity so we can have a very close cooperation with China on quality education because in terms of China, their universities are rapidly moving towards the top ranked universities in the US and that is something that we can find as an opportunity.



## Conference Policy Recommendations

- ✚ China chair in the department of political science should be established and under that student can have a permanent forum to research on China, Chinese strategies, Chinese development model and some new avenues like that.
- ✚ HEC provides research projects regarding the joint project with developed countries but they never gave the opportunity to the Pakistani students of joint research project with China. So joint research projects with China should be encouraged.
- ✚ The student should be given the research work on China and then whatever research they do that can be published over there also, so that the student can benefit out of it.
- ✚ China should not wait and should come forward to rescue friends and allies in the world like Pakistan. China should initiate CMF China Monetary Fund to help her friends and allies from economic crisis.
- ✚ We need to promote cooperative research and understanding of the concept of community of share future.
- ✚ Pakistan needs to enhance its capacity of Chinese investment and youth has a special role to play.
- ✚ We should look at our only shortcomings and gaps and correct them. Pakistan should work on self-reliance and don't look towards other countries because this dependency syndrome is not good for Pakistan.
- ✚ Pakistan should defeat enemies' designs, counter-propaganda and further strengthen time tested-ties with China.
- ✚ Pakistan needs to learn lessons from China to pursue economic growth.



- ✚ In short, the need of hour for us as a nation is to live within our means, devote maximum possible resources for the task of accelerating our economic growth and pursue a low risk and non-adventurous foreign policy, while strengthening our strategic partnership with China and other friendly countries.
- ✚ we should adopt austerity as our national motto so as to raise our national saving rate.
- ✚ Countries in the region, should stick to openness and inclusive and uphold the spirit of partnership by creating powerful synergy for connectivity. They should jointly contribute and share benefits to create a bright Future of integrated development with all parties and built, all the menstrual multi-layered and sustainable connectivity network.
- ✚ China knows the art of turning or transforming challenges into opportunities like the initiative of OBOR as an overland trade route and times of difficulties in maritime trade. It just does not need to get agitated over the high-level US visits to Taiwan and get irritated to initiate military measures and get itself stuck in a war of attrition like the one Russian is involved into. Instead, it needs to maintain its traditional composition and continue its peaceful efforts to rise as a prosperous power of the world.
- ✚ Government must take the lead in establishing robust institutional framework. We need a collective work, collective frame of work, need to continue in policies, to plan and implement the regional connectivity agenda.
- ✚ The development of the routes and corridors currently being envisioned in a very much driven by China itself again. It's China's projects, China will lead it. Definitely, they are very clear about the structure. Now what the thing is that we need to be clear about how to respond to the project.



- + China should realize the power of communication and digital world as it has a great potential in tweaking the contemporary international power landscape
- + We have no boundaries in the skies and the smoke or any other issues might have the same repercussions as the other countries might have. Climate change is a global issue and it requires global governance systems to be intact to identify management issues and more.
- + While evaluating the global political and economic situation, I must say that as a realist, states must assess the magnitude of policy planning and intentions behind great strategies but at the same time one could believe the idealist approach as well that gave us world institutions through which international regimes are working.
- + It is important for China to comply its projects and gain positive global recognition.
- + China still has the potential to make stronger economic and political bonds throughout the globe which will lead towards more Chinese influence in the global economic system.
- + China-Pakistan space cooperation will help Pakistan in terms of satellite monitoring of natural disasters and agricultural production, land and resources surveying, and waste handling in a microgravity environment."
- + China doesn't benefit technologically from Pakistan but Beijing considers space cooperation as an opportunity to expand its soft power.
- + Pakistan needs to develop its infrastructure and continue its venture towards space and satellite development if it wants to ensure its survival in the region right next to a strong rival and compete in the region.
- + Humans are value-driven creatures, culture creating creatures. Thus, the need for delving into the historical sociology of China, in a Weberian tradition is perhaps equally important as is a study of its political system, constitutions and institutions.



- ✚ The Swiss psychologist Carl G Jung thought that whatever the immediate problems on the international stage, what was really significant occurred at a more fundamental level. So the solution lies in 'looking beneath the concrete institutions to the psychological gestalt that underpinned them.
- ✚ Through CPEC the government of Pakistan must take initiatives to overcome the energy crisis, increase the power generation capacity and to fulfill the electricity needs of the country.
- ✚ This project should be planned in a way that all the provinces of Pakistan will benefit from infrastructure and energy projects especially Baluchistan, and also through number of employment opportunities to help address the grievances of unemployed youth.
- ✚ Pakistan's social and political governance is vital for the successful implementation of CPEC. For ensuring political stability in Pakistan it is necessary that various institutions may work within their specific domain.
- ✚ For successful completion and implementation of CPEC project, government should make a transparent mechanism related to CPEC so that it will open a door for maximum local and foreign investment.
- ✚ Security regarding CPEC project will remain a major challenge for government of China and Pakistan. There is a dire need to evolve mechanism to speed up the process of building infrastructure and to safeguard effectively the neti route of this corridor form Gwadar to Khunjerab. Militant organization active in that area are trying to destabilize the project. For example the TTP, ISIS, and Lashkar i Jhangvi have been at the front to sabotage the CPEC.
- ✚ The government of Pakistan must launch different operations to curb the activities of different terrorist groups and prevent them before execution of terrorist act.



- ✚ The security is crucial. Arranging ten thousand security personnel for the protection of people and infrastructure related to CPEC is not sufficient, there should be taken necessary measures to curb extremism in the areas as an important strategy to counter insurgency, and counter terrorism.
- ✚ Role of USA and India is crucial to break down to their level of strategically crucial partners in this region and a destabilized Afghanistan needs to be prevented from hampering business proliferation of the projects related to CPEC.



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Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Quaid-e-Azam Campus (New  
Campus), Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.  
Phone: +92 42 99231229  
Email: [chairperson.polsc@pu.edu.pk](mailto:chairperson.polsc@pu.edu.pk), Web: [www.pu.edu.pk](http://www.pu.edu.pk)