NOT FOR FURTHER DISTRIBUTION WITHOUT PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR

"Russia-Pakistan Relations and the Constraints of Geoeconomics"

Christopher Clary (cclary@albany.edu)

Accepted Manuscript, Asian Security

Abstract: Russia-Pakistan relations have improved since the end of the Cold War. While that trend is likely to continue, Russia is unlikely to transform Pakistan's difficult strategic circumstances. Russia is insufficiently wealthy to provide enough aid and investment to revitalize Pakistan's economy. Russia is too concerned with maintaining access to the Indian defense market to increase defense sales to Pakistan more than modestly. This article consequently reviews what it calls the constraints of geoeconomics, where the relatively small size of the Russian and Pakistani economies combines with the considerable distances between both societies to limit Russian-Pakistani ties despite periodic official interest in deepening them. It situates these current obstacles with the historic Soviet-Pakistani relationship, which was similarly constrained by distance, great power politics, and Indian concerns.

Keywords: Pakistan, Russia, India, Ukraine, Afghanistan

Introduction

Pakistani optimism about contemporary prospects for Russia-Pakistan relations often contains within it some regret about the past. In a common retelling of their formative diplomatic history, many Pakistanis claim that the choice between partnership with the Soviet Union and the United States was a matter of mere chance. Pakistan's first prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, made overtures to both the United States and Soviet Union in the initial years after Pakistan's independence. Moscow invited Khan for an August 1949 visit to the Soviet Union, but Khan had to decline because he was needed at home for Pakistan's Independence Day festivities that same month. Pakistani and Soviet diplomats were unable to settle on an acceptable date for a rescheduled visit. So instead Liaquat's first trip to a superpower capital was to Washington, DC, in May 1950.

The rest was history, so the myth goes. Liaquat took positions publicly on that trip that troubled Moscow and pleased Washington, beginning a process that ended in U.S.-Pakistan alignment (*Dawn* 2020). Achakzai (2022) captures the prevailing sentiment when he writes, "Had Liaq[u]at Ali Khan simultaneously visited Russia when he visited the U.S., Pakistan's history would have been different today and probably even better" (also see Malik 1994, 43, 108-109). Ahsan (2004, 74) goes further, arguing that the choice at this critical juncture led to enduring and incalculable harm to Pakistan: "Friendship with the U.S. at the cost of enmity with Moscow was not a prudent approach. Pakistan, at no stage, had the capacity and resources to play the role of a 'frontline state'... This was a suicidal approach for which the country had to pay a heavy cost."

Such analysts obviously are not merely furthering an historical argument. They also are making a claim with implications for Pakistan's current strategic choices. If past proximity to Washington was a mistake, perhaps greater distance should be introduced today? If past skepticism of Moscow was in error, perhaps embracing strategic partnership with Russia is appropriate now.

Yet this retelling of history contains within it crucial flaws that make it a poor foundation for strategic reassessment. There are matters of historical debate: many observers contend that a Soviet invitation was elicited by Liaquat to arouse U.S. jealousy and was never serious (Haqqani 2013, 44; Kux 2001, 33). Thus the supposed fork in the road may not have been viewed as a serious choice by either Pakistani or Soviet leaders. More crucially, such a narrative misunderstands Pakistan's historic grand strategy, which sought to secure extra-regional great power assistance to compensate for its regional imbalance confronting a much larger India, while simultaneously seeking to avoid entrapment in any great power disputes (Rais 1991). There is little historic evidence that Pakistan could have secured a better deal with Moscow than the one it extracted from its on-again/off-again partnership with Washington. Since neither the USSR nor the U.S. ever perceived a meaningful, direct threat from India, there were profound limits on Pakistan's ability to translate its concerns about India into the sort of external resources that would help Pakistan resolve the power asymmetries of the subcontinent. These strategic drivers largely endure even as so many other aspects of global politics have transformed.

This article examines contemporary Russia-Pakistan relations in the run-up to and aftermath of Russia's calamitous war with Ukraine. It first summarizes their shared history, emphasizing that Pakistan relations with Moscow have been largely derivative of its relationship with the United States. Pakistan has frequently attempted to repair relations with first the Soviet Union and now Russia when its relationship with Washington was troubled. While such efforts have occasionally paid temporary dividends, they never transformed Pakistan's strategic circumstances. The article then focuses on the two pillars of potential cooperation proposed by relationship optimists: (1) possible economic and energy ties and (2) potential defense and security partnership. It shows that recent cooperation is modest at best and future cooperation faces obstacles as well. There are important geoeconomics constraints on the relationship between two states separated by thousands

of miles—much of it poorly connected by roads or rail—that cannot be easily obviated by diplomatic fiat. While some factors that hampered deeper Pakistan-Soviet ties have been removed, other historic obstacles have only worsened in the last three decades. While Islamabad and Moscow may edge closer, the relationship is likely to remain insubstantial. The article concludes by showing that the Ukraine war and its aftermath are unlikely to overcome these fundamental problems.

Past as Prelude: Modulated Antagonism before 2000

In February 2022, Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Moscow—the first Pakistani prime minister to do so in more than twenty years. His supporters were quick to call his visit to Moscow historic. Indeed, it may long be noted in history books, but perhaps not for the reasons Khan may have hoped. First, the visit contributed to the collapse of Khan's government, which was already suffering from political weakness and civil-military frictions. Second, his arrival coincided with the Russian invasion of neighboring Ukraine, giving Khan a high-profile cameo appearance in the first great power war on European in more than two decades.

Despite the hype, Khan's visit was not a rupture from the past. Since independence, Pakistan has looked to outside great powers to help it overcome the structural imbalance it faces in the subcontinent. While Pakistan has had the greatest success in securing U.S. patronage, Pakistani officials have doubted recurrently whether U.S. assistance was worth Washington's demands for policy alignment. Khan's visit is exemplary of other historical attempts by Pakistani leaders to reduce their dependence on the United States and consequently gain greater freedom of maneuver on the world stage through publicized dalliances with Moscow. Such maneuvers have been especially attractive for Islamabad (and to a lesser extent Moscow) during periods of improving U.S.-India ties or periods of estranged U.S.-Pakistan ones. Pakistani leaders have intermittently decided a well-

publicized trip to Moscow might help encourage Washington to provide more assistance—and they have sometimes been correct in that calculation.

Almost from the outset, Pakistan's relations with Moscow were sour. Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, observed that "Russia alone of all the great countries has not sent a congratulatory message to Pakistan." He argued that "America needs Pakistan more than Pakistan needs America," because of Pakistan's position along a frontier where "Russia is not so very far away." He held these publicly stated views alongside a private belief that "communism [does] not flourish in the soil of Islam," making it clear in his mind that Pakistani interests lied "more with two great democracies, namely the UK and the USA rather than Russia" (Quoted in Haqqani 2013, 9, 34-35). Jinnah died just a year after independence, but his views were shared by many among the Pakistani elite.

Pakistan did not establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union until May 1948 and did not have an ambassador resident in Moscow until December 1949. In contrast, Pakistan's neighbor and soon-to-be rival, India, announced its intent to establish diplomatic relations in April 1947, four months prior to Indian and Pakistani independence. A few months later Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru sent his sister, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, to serve as New Delhi's first ambassador in Moscow.

Once Soviet-Pakistan relations were established, they were hardly warm. As a young diplomat posted to Moscow in these earliest years of the relationship, Samiullah Koreshi (2004, 41) recalls that Pakistan's first ambassador there "faced a total isolation by the Soviet leadership. His persistent efforts to make friends with [the] USSR were frustrated. [The] Soviets were as indifferent to the embassy and as hostile to Pakistan as we were keen to be near them." Those relations suffered further as a result of allegations that members of Pakistan's Communist Party had played a role in a failed military coup attempt, commonly referred to as the Rawalpindi Conspiracy, which authorities

had discovered and disrupted in February-March 1951. Given ties between the coup plotters and Communist Party front organizations, the Pakistani government was quick to publicize that the conspirators had ties to "a certain foreign country" and soon used the plot to justify systematic and thorough repression of Communist-linked groups in Pakistan (*New York Times* 1951; Zaheer 1998, xxiii-xxiv, 233).

In October 1951, Liaquat was killed by an assassin. This began a period of political turmoil that resulted in the gradual increase in the influence of Pakistan Army chief General Ayub Khan. While Liaquat had signaled clear interest in closer U.S.-Pakistan ties, his civilian successors (with Ayub's encouragement) brought Pakistan into even closer alignment with Washington. In 1954, the United States and Pakistan signed a Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement and Pakistan subsequently joined the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and then, in 1955, the Central Treaty Organization. Pakistan offered access and bases in exchange for aid and security commitments. Soon Pakistani and American officials were discussing seismic monitors, early warning radars, signals intelligence collection facilities, and airfields for U-2 spy plane operations from Pakistani territory (Bolsinger 2021-2022, 64). In the seven years after Liaquat's death, Pakistan had six different prime ministers of varied temperaments and inclinations. Yet when Pakistani civilian leaders occasionally contemplated drifting away from the U.S. partnership, they were brought back in line by America's supporters in the military and bureaucracy (Malik 1994, 113). Ayub eventually concluded the domestic political stability was harming Pakistan's national security and overthrew the civilian government in October 1958.

Superpower relations with the subcontinent were temporarily disequilibrated at the end of the 1950s and early 1960s by the emerging Sino-Soviet split and the distinct but simultaneous worsening of Sino-Indian ties over their disputed land boundary. U.S.-India ties improved as Sino-Indian ties worsened following border clashes in 1959. Additionally, the Soviet shootdown of

Francis Gary Powers U-2 spy plane in May 1960, which had departed from Pakistan, led Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to privately threaten Pakistan's ambassador to Moscow. Pakistani leaders were reminded of the dangers associated with ever-closer cooperation with the United States. Malik (1994, 172) writes in his study of the period, "Due to the political fallout of these U-2 incursions, a sense of realism began to grow in Soviet-Pakistan relations." Pakistan explored improved Soviet ties as a consequence. Shortly after the U-2 episode, Ayub's government publicly welcomed proposed Soviet assistance for oil exploration.

U.S. aid to India increased after India's defeat in its 1962 war with China. Ayub continued to court modest Soviet aid and pursued incremental improvement of ties with the Soviet Union, culminating in Ayub's first visit to Moscow in April 1965. The Johnson administration tired of what they viewed as never-ending Pakistani efforts to involve Washington in the India-Pakistan rivalry. When Ayub's government initiated a war over Kashmir in 1965, the Soviet Union took the lead in mediating a peace accord in a summit at Tashkent in 1966. The U.S. dramatically curtailed military assistance to both India and Pakistan in a show of Washington's disfavor over the 1965 war, but since Pakistan was far more dependent on U.S. aid and materiel, the effect was asymmetrically punitive to Pakistan. Within a few years, the Pakistan military struggled to acquire new tanks to replace those lost in the 1965 war and obsolescing older models.

Already suffering U.S. sanctions, Ayub's government sought to demonstrate that Pakistan was not without options. Pakistan now explored the possibility of acquiring Soviet military hardware. Additionally, Pakistan signaled its seriousness to Washington and Moscow by stating in the spring of 1968—first privately then publicly—its intent to close the U.S. intelligence facility in Peshawar, Pakistan (*Washington Post* 1968). These twin maneuvers rattled U.S. representatives in Pakistan, with the U.S. ambassador writing to President Johnson, "If Pakistan is forced to rely on Russia for arms, Peshawar is lost and all of our other vital interests in this part of the world,

including Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, are jeopardized" (Oehlert 1968a). That same month, Pakistan told U.S. diplomats that the Soviet Union had "agreed in principle to sell [Pakistan] any hardware it wants, including tanks" (Oehlert 1968b). Pakistan's efforts to play the two superpowers off of one another worked. The Soviet Union sold 200 T-54s and T-55 tanks to Pakistan that same year.

Yet Pakistan's new Soviet relationship proved incompatible not just with maintaining its U.S. ties but also with its growing friendship with the People's Republic of China. By the end of the 1960s, the Sino-Soviet split was profound, resulting in violent clashes along the shared border of the two Asian Communist powers in 1969. When Ayub's successor, General Yahya Khan, attempted to secure additional Soviet military assistance during his visit to Moscow in June that year—just three months after the border clashes with China—he was told by Soviet premier Alexei Kosygin that Pakistan could not "be on friendly terms at the same time with China and with the Soviet Union" (Kux 2001, 180-181).

The Soviet Union, too, faced considerable skepticism from India about sales to New Delhi's regional rival (Coughlin 1969). By then Moscow had become a leading supplier of military hardware to Pakistan's larger neighbor, so the potential for enhanced Pakistan ties carried with it the danger of weakening already promising ties with India. The CIA (1972, 4) would later assess: "In 1969 the Soviets concluded that their attempt to curry favor with Pakistan was losing them more good will in New Delhi than they were gaining in Islamabad. Military aid deliveries to Pakistan were accordingly suspended…" The United States also seemed inclined to return to old habits. The Nixon administration announced in October 1970 that it would provide weapons to Pakistan as a "one-time exception" to the Johnson-era embargo and soon "tilted" strongly toward Pakistan in the East Pakistan crisis of 1971. The Soviet Union for its part signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with India during that crisis, and generally worked to block U.S. and Chinese interventions during

India's military operations against East Pakistan—soon Bangladesh—in November and December of that year.

The Pakistani defeat in the 1971 war, despite meaningful but hardly herculean U.S. efforts to prevent Indian victory, brought Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to power. His nation's sometimes criminal conduct in the 1971 war caused considerable U.S. congressional concern, hampering Nixon's ability to resume transfer of lethal military equipment despite his abortive attempts to do. In 1972, the Nixon administration opted as well not to provide sizeable food aid to Pakistan under the PL-480 program. Given these slights, Bhutto announced his government's intent to leave the SEATO alliance in November 1972 (Saunders and Holdridge 1972). This was part of a broader shift toward "bilateralism" that Bhutto espoused publicly, in which he argued that cooperation with each of the great powers should be pursued so long as it did not harm Pakistan's bilateral relationships with the other great powers (Malik 1994, 228-229).

Bhutto would continue to explore creative ways to secure renewed more extensive U.S. support. On February 10, 1973, Bhutto ordered the raid of the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad where Pakistani authorities captured a large cache of Soviet-origin weapons. Bhutto's primary goal for the operation was to discredit political opponents at home, but the Pakistani leader was never averse to killing two birds with one stone. Bhutto pointed to the episode as evidence of a Soviet plot (Bureau of Intelligence and Research 1973). U.S. government observers were not oblivious to Bhutto's instrumental goals, yet the following month, in part to reassure Bhutto, Nixon decided to resume limited military equipment transfers (Sober 1973; Kissinger 1973).

Throughout 1973, Bhutto stressed repeatedly to U.S. officials that he perceived a Soviet plot to secure access to Pakistan's southern Makran coast, even as he simultaneously attempted an opening to Moscow (Saunders 1973). He told American officials that he was under intense pressure from the Soviet Union to join its proposed Asian collective security architecture—a Soviet-designed

effort to contain China. All the while, Bhutto solicited Soviet aid. His efforts netted the Pakistani leader more than $600 million in Soviet credits toward a large steel mill project near Karachi (Central Intelligence Agency 1979). Bhutto visited Moscow in 1974, though his officials assured their American counterparts, the trip was merely a "stalling" tactic to deflect Soviet pressure. These same Pakistani officials implied, however, that if Washington was not more forthcoming with "tangible evidence" of U.S. reliability then Bhutto might be unable to arrest "eroding" Pakistani public support for its historic "pro-U.S. orientation" (Central Intelligence Agency 1974). In February 1975, the new Ford administration finally lifted the ban on arms transfers to South Asia, though with a condition of cash sales of "defensive" weapons only (Kux 2001, 218).

The impact of the decision was modest, though, because any renewed flow of U.S. weapons was held back by the Ford administration as it sought to pressure Pakistan to accept binding limits on its nuclear program. Islamabad instead ramped up nuclear weapons efforts after India's 1974 test of a "peaceful" nuclear explosive device. U.S. coercion was insufficient to cause Bhutto to reconsider Pakistan's nuclear requirements and Bhutto's Soviet visits were not sufficiently worrisome to Washington to cause it to deprioritize American nonproliferation goals.

Again, a Pakistani leader had tried to play Moscow and Washington off one another and, again, the results were tangible but unremarkable. The incoming Carter administration was even more concerned about Pakistan's nuclear efforts and even more skeptical of weapons sales for the remainder of Bhutto's term. They were further troubled by the new military dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq, which ousted Bhutto in 1977.

In 1979, an increasingly gerontocratic and unimaginative regime in Moscow believed it had little choice but to intervene in Afghanistan, lest Kabul escape the Soviet orbit. The Soviet invasion was sufficient to cause Washington to overlook prior concerns with Pakistan, and the two states repaired relations into a close de facto alliance following the Soviet invasion. There were no serious

attempts at Soviet-Pakistani rapprochement throughout the decade-long duration of the Afghan War, though modest technical and economic ties continued into the 1980s. Pakistan instead played a frontline role in supporting a proxy war in Afghanistan that killed tens of thousands of Soviet soldiers and led to Soviet abandonment of their Afghan client state by the end of the decade.

Tumult in great power politics in 1989 again disequilibrated the subcontinent. The Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in February, the Chinese military violently quashed Tiananmen Square protests in June, and the Berlin Wall fell in November. The Cold War soon ended and the Soviet Union formally dissolved in 1991. The U.S.-China de facto alliance collapsed under its ideological contradictions now that the Soviet threat was removed. India had carefully avoided a full rupture with Washington despite its 1971 treaty with the Soviet Union, and now New Delhi explored closer ties with the sole remaining superpower. Washington responded slowly to this opening with India given continued nonproliferation concerns toward the subcontinent. The U.S. government also decided in 1990 to sanction Pakistan for its nuclear weapons developments. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan meant American policymakers no longer felt compelled to ignore the steady stream of intelligence regarding Islamabad's nuclear weapons' ambitions.

In this new post-Cold War landscape, Russia and Pakistan tentatively explored deeper ties. Benazir Bhutto's ambassador to Moscow, Tanvir Ahmed Khan (2012), has written that "powerful sections of the Pakistani establishment," especially those who had been associated with the anti-Soviet jihad, remained deeply skeptical of Russia and worked determinedly against improved ties in the 1990s. Similarly, in Moscow, there was a split between those who thought Russia's future lay in Asia and those who prioritized deepening relations with the West (Malik 1994, viii). There were a slew of senior official visits between Islamabad and Moscow in the early 1990s—vice presidents, ministers and ministers of state, government secretaries, but no national leader visits. Russian President Boris Yeltsin invited Benazir Bhutto to Moscow in December 1994—but the trip was

cancelled, reportedly for reasons of Yeltsin's health (Shukla 1999, 255). A Russian parliamentary delegation visited in 1995, and indicated Moscow was again willing to supply military hardware to Pakistan (Shah 2001, 43-45).

The post-Soviet mess around the former Communist power's old periphery created reasons for Russia-Pakistan diplomacy but also created conflicts of interest as well. While neither Moscow nor Islamabad sought a long civil war in Afghanistan, both desired for their proxies to win even if a long civil war was the result of that ambition. Pakistan worked strenuously to bring down the Moscow-backed Najibullah government that the Soviets had left behind in their former client state. Russia also blamed Pakistan for providing support to militants not only in Afghanistan but also in Tajikistan, which was convulsed by civil war from 1992 to 1997, and Chechnya, where Russia fought a vicious counterinsurgency beginning in 1994 (Iqbal 2000; Raman 2010). Pakistan's eventual backing of the Taliban did not improve matters.

These bilateral tensions did not prevent cooperation even as they limited it. Pakistan and Russia were observers to the Tajikistan peace process and eventually agreed—along with Afghanistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—to act as "political and moral guarantors" to the 1997 accord that concluded the conflict. After Benazir Bhutto's cancelled her planned 1994 visit, her successor as prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, did manage to visit Moscow in April 1999. Yet that meeting during Boris Yeltsin's final months in office—with the Russian president's health failing and power ebbing—was unremarkable, producing little more than a joint commission to enhance trade and Russian agreement to launch a Pakistani satellite (Ivanov 1999; Bantin 1999; Agence France Presse 1999).

Much of the framework for post-Cold War Russia-Pakistan relations was evident by 1999. Russia was too weak to serve as an alternative great power patron. Pakistan, for its part, was committed to a policy course in Afghanistan that contributed to Russian suspicion while it was also

engaged in a rivalry with India, Russia's historic partner. The respective heads of both countries at the time of their April 1999 summit would be out of office by the end of the year, replaced by men they had appointed. Pakistan would be governed by military dictator Pervez Musharraf for much of the next decade. Vladimir Putin would prove more durable, and the contemporary period of Russian foreign policy is inextricably linked to his tenure in office.

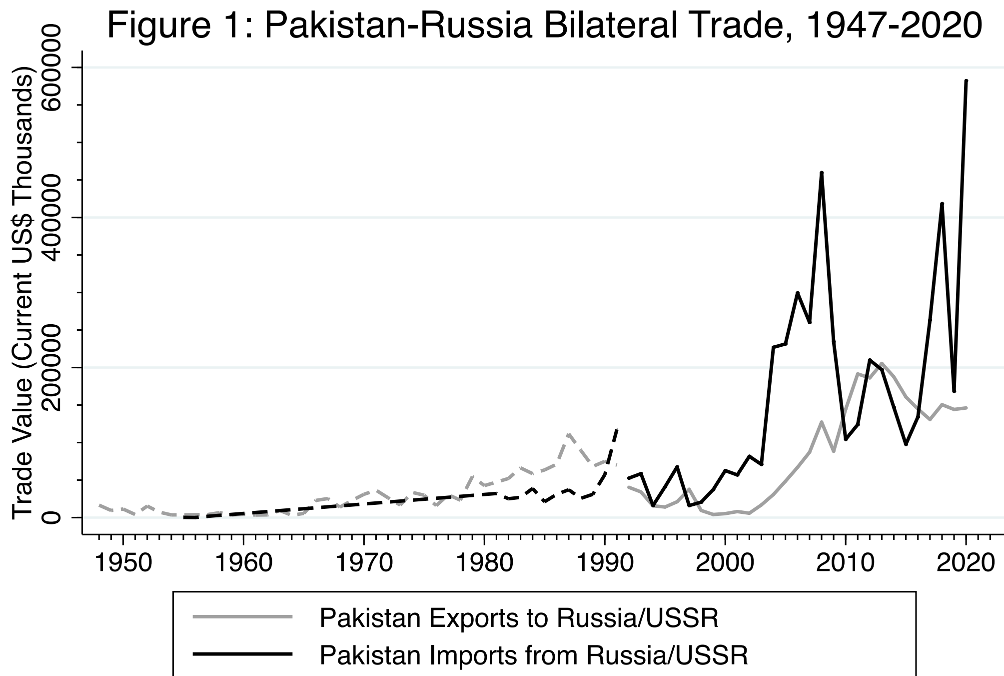
Pillars for a New Partnership with Putin's Russia?

When Musharraf ousted Sharif in October 1999, the Russian government made public expressions of concern about the fate of the leader who had visited Moscow only six months earlier. Yet soon Putin replaced the ailing Yeltsin, and the new Russian leader had no ideological hang-ups with autocracy—military or otherwise. By 2000, ideological limitations to a new Pakistani-Russian partnership were gone, and both governments explored possible avenues of cooperation. Putin also accelerated the improvement in Sino-Russian ties that had begun the previous decade. Given the "all-weather friendship" between Beijing and Islamabad, this China-Russia entente could coexist happily with warmer Pakistani-Russian ties. Yet always lurking in the background was Russia's desire not to lose the benefits it gained from historic relations with India at the expense of improving ties with Pakistan. This has continued to serve as a primary impediment to transformed Russia-Pakistan ties.

In the contemporary era, two dimensions are most commonly highlighted by analysts optimistic about the future of the Russia-Pakistan relationship. I first review the possibility of much deeper economic and energy ties, before turning next to progress on defense and security cooperation. A careful examination of each area shows, however, that just as many constraints to cooperation exist as do incentives for it. Geography, economics, and power politics continue to militate against meaningful Russia-Pakistan partnership.

Economic and Energy Ties

Putin and Musharraf met on the sidelines of multilateral gatherings in 2000 and 2002 before Putin invited Musharraf to Moscow in 2003. This summit again failed to be transformative. The Kremlin emphasized that Putin had stated that Pakistan-Russia relations "could not and must not be coordinated to the detriment of Russia's traditional partners," a clear reference to India. Yet one area highlighted by the two autocrats did improve under their stewardship and has continued to improve after Musharraf's departure. Both leaders stressed their desire for more bilateral trade, and two-way trade between the states has gone up from its early 2000s nadir (see Figure 1). Two-way Russia-Pakistan trade increased from a paltry $87.5 million in the year before the Putin-Musharraf summit to $728 million in 2020—a more than seven-fold increase in nominal terms.



Yet neither Russia nor Pakistan are major players in the economies of the other. In 2020, Pakistan was perhaps the 44th largest economy in nominal terms, but it was merely the 63rd largest market for Russian exports, according to World Bank and International Monetary Fund estimates. That same year Russia was the 11th largest economy in the world, but only the 27th largest market for Pakistani goods. Pakistan buys mostly agricultural products from Russia. Wheat and legumes make up nearly 80% of Russian exports to Pakistan. In exchange, Russia imports modest quantities of textiles (55 percent of Pakistan's overall exports to Russia) and citrus (20 percent) along with other odds and ends. Such trade is no doubt important to Russian and Pakistani farmers, but hardly evokes the grand strategic potential of the relationship.

Popular conversation focuses instead is on the possibility of energy imports, pipelines, and connectivity infrastructure. "There are many opportunities available to strengthen Pakistan-Russia cooperation in the field of fuel and energy, a sector in which Russia has acquired advanced technology," wrote Owais (2007, 132). More than a decade later, Khan (2019, 70-71) could still sketch a heady vision where Russian "investments will potentially meet Pakistan's energy needs, while contributing to economic buoyancy that would ultimately pave way for regional integration, specifically through transnational energy cooperation." When agriculture—arguably the most established sector of cooperation—is mentioned, it tends to be an afterthought: "Prospects are bright for promoting trade, investment and joint ventures in the fields of energy, infrastructure development, metal industry and agriculture sectors," Hanif (2013, 76) surveyed.

There is little evidence the reality has kept up with the vision. Of Russia's modest $400-$500 billion total foreign direct investment the Russian central bank records no outbound direct investment into Pakistan in the last decade—or at least none that exceed the relatively low $500,000 recording cutoff (Bank of Russia 2022). While the State Bank of Pakistan only reports the top 50 or 60 investing countries in each reporting period, it also does not list Russia as among those top

private investing countries in the last decade (State Bank of Pakistan 2022). While this does not eliminate the possibility that Russian funds are being routed through some third jurisdiction—for tax minimization or other purposes—it does indicate that the hope and hype are not yet born out in the official statistics of either state.

The dream of Pakistani authorities for at least three decades has been to offer Pakistan as a conduit for energy pipelines. And for at least three decades that vision has been stymied by geopolitics. The proposed architecture in these dreams has varied: pipelines through Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) were a mainstay of news articles and commentary in the 1990s while an Iran-Pakistan (IP) was the talk of the 2010s. Both architectures came with two variants: one that involved liquifying the natural gas and shipping it from established Pakistani ports (Karachi) or developing ones (Gwadar) and the other variant hoping to connect the pipelines to India's much larger economy. The attraction of turning TAP to TAPI and IP to IPI is obvious. India's total energy consumption in 2019 was nearly 32 quadrillion British thermal units (Btu) while Pakistan consumed roughly a tenth as much: an estimated 3.5 quadrillion Btu. (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2022). Moreover, the process of liquifying, transporting, and re-gasifying natural gas is expensive and requires enormous upfront capital investments. Pipelines are also expensive, but tend to be cheaper than the LNG infrastructure over short- to medium-distances (Molnar 2022). For investors either considering pipelines that transit through Pakistan to an LNG terminal or that go onto the Indian market, the upfront capital costs would be considerable and recouping the investment would take years if not decades. Variability in the price of natural gas adds some uncertainty, but the politics of either TAPI or IPI have been toxic for investors. With a brief respite during the Obama years, the U.S. has been intensely focused on sanctioning Iran, deterring even risk-acceptant investors such as China from financing the Iran-Pakistan project (Richter and

Rodriguez 2012). The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan route never could overcome widespread instability in Afghanistan (Rashid 2010).

Russia's role in Pakistan's pipeline politics has not yet produced a better outcome than Pakistan's other attempts in this area. In three proposed projects, Russia has been asked to provide technical and construction assistance to build lengthy natural gas pipelines—in all three cases pipelines that will carry other countries' natural gas to South Asian markets. In the first such case, Russian assistance has been mooted publicly by Pakistani authorities in helping build a pipeline from Kazakhstan to Pakistan, but the distances involved are considerable and any Kazakhstan origin must go through Afghanistan or Iran—and hence struggle with the same problems as the TAPI or IPI architectures (Bhutta 2022). While Prime Minister Imran Khan reportedly planned to raise a Kazakhstan-origin pipeline in his visit to Russia in February 2022, the project seems to be at an embryonic stage (Press Trust of India 2022).

By far the most advanced effort envisioning a Russian role was formerly known as the North-South pipeline and now is more commonly referred to as the Pakistan Stream project. Under the current proposal, Russia would provide the necessary infrastructure to connect LNG terminals in the southern city of Karachi to the outskirts of Lahore, via an 1100-kilometers-pipeline with associated compressor stations to permit the gas flow. The planned Kasur terminus (less than 10 kilometers from India) for the pipeline is indicative that planners may be keeping open the option of a future Indian extension. Unlike the Kazakhstan project, Pakistan Stream has been discussed extensively in public and both countries have signed agreements toward its planned completion. Yet the status of those agreements suggests trouble. A 2015 intergovernmental agreement anticipated the pipeline would be complete by mid-2018 and all associated compressor stations would be built by mid-2020 (*Dawn* 2015). Instead of meeting those milestones, the project underwent years of negotiations and re-negotiations. U.S. sanctions in December 2015 against a Russian firm involved

in the planned construction derailed the initial agreement (Bhutta 2016). Even after a replacement for the sanctioned firm was found, several other sticking points appear to have prevented Prime Minister Khan from announcing progress on the pipeline during his 2022 Moscow visit (Mustafa 2022; Isaad and Nicholas 2022; Shahzeb and Iqbal 2022).

The most ambitious imagined Russian project involves a 1,500-kilometer offshore pipeline from the gas-rich Gulf states, such as Bahrain and Qatar, to Pakistan. This would be one of the longest offshore pipeline projects in the world. While frequently mentioned in the press, the project appears to be stuck at the feasibility study stage and is still far from construction yet alone completion (Gazprom 2019; I. Khan 2019).

These are not the only roles mentioned for major Russian investments in the Pakistan economy, though in some ways they represent the projects most likely to reach fruition. Most ventures discussed by relationship optimists do not withstand even brief scrutiny. For example, since Soviet investment helped to establish the Karachi Steel Mills in the 1970s, Russia has been periodically proposed as a possible savior of the now-antiquated industrial facility that has not produced any steel since 2015. As of 2022, though, it appears that if any foreign firm helps with modernizing the facilities that it is likely to be a Chinese rather than a Russian one (*The News International* 2021b; Khan 2022). Similarly, since Soviet (and later Russian) experts helped in building power plants in Guddu, Muzaffargarh, and Multan, their help in modernizing and rehabilitating these facilities is often mentioned by officials and in the press—but any execution of these schemes is thus far lacking (*The Express Tribune* 2013; Masood 2018). Russian help for construction of a new power plant in Jamshoro has also been "under consideration" since 2017 (*Geo TV* 2017; Embassy of Pakistan, Moscow 2022). Elsewhere, a planned set of electrical transmission lines has been proposed to stretch from Central Asia to Pakistan to carry abundant summer hydropower from the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan. Russia has suggested it might contribute

its excess electricity during periods of lower hydropower generation, helping the year-round economics of the project as well as benefiting Russian power producers. Yet this proposed project, referred to commonly as Central Asia-South Asia-1000 (CASA-1000) faces the same troubles with Afghan instability that has prevented the feasibility of the TAPI pipeline (Kiani 2016). Finally, Russian interest in exploiting Thar's coal fields has been frequently mentioned in the Pakistani press for the last decade, but the evidence that such interest will manifest into a meaningful financial or technical commitment is scant (*The Express Tribune* 2011).

All of these projects were proposed before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but Russia's invasion of Ukraine has made all of these projects less likely. The severity and international breadth of sanctions targeting Moscow has grown, making these projects economically and politically dangerous for Pakistan while simultaneously calling into question Russia's availability to provide financial and technical assistance given the current strains on the Russian economy. Some projects, like the CASA-1000 transmission lines, have extensive U.S. support making it even less likely that Washington will welcome Russian participation (U.S. Agency for International Development 2022).

Additionally, the post-2022, post-Ukraine landscape interacts with the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, which has restored the Taliban to power. The restored Taliban government has little legitimacy abroad and limited control of the countryside. The Afghan Taliban's ideological affinity with the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) may also complicate Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. Afghan instability consequently exacerbates all proposals that depend on ground corridors from Russia through Central Asia into Pakistan. They were economically and politically risky during the best years of post-9/11 Afghanistan. Those risks have now grown in prohibitive ways since then. Perhaps a shared Russian-Pakistani desire to manage that instability might provide another avenue of cooperation even if economic ties are not yet sturdy. That possibility is considered next.

Russia-Pakistan Cooperation on Defense and Security

Pakistan and the United States grudgingly reunited after 9/11, when Washington demanded that Pakistan support an American-led war against the Taliban. Pakistan was hesitant to resume its status as frontline state and even more so to abandon the Taliban, which had been the vehicle by which Pakistan had finally secured its multidecade goal of ensuring a friendly regime in Kabul (see Fair 2014, ch. 5). Pakistan hedged this policy reversal by providing safe haven to Taliban leaders as they fled the U.S.-backed regime change operation while simultaneously offering basing, transit routes, and intelligence to the American regional counterterrorist and counterinsurgency effort. Within a few years of the Taliban's ouster, Pakistani military and intelligence officials appear to have calculated that Washington's staying power in Afghanistan would be transitory, and indications of Pakistani support—rather than mere safe haven—for the Afghan Taliban and the closely aligned Haqqani network grew (Tankel 2018).

Pakistan clearly held a position of influence over post-9/11 Afghanistan's fate, which led to engagement with the Musharraf regime from all the extra-regional great powers. While Western powers were fearful for the new government in Kabul and worried about signs of instability in Pakistan, China and Russia also sought to ensure that Afghanistan's long-term trajectory did not prove injurious to their interests. Comments by U.S. officials and political leaders that implied Washington was covetous of enduring military bases in Central Asia rankled Beijing and Moscow. During a February 2005 visit to Kabul, Republican Senator John McCain told the press that he desired a "long-term strategic partnership" between the United States and Afghanistan that included "joint military permanent bases" (Synovitz 2005).

Despite unparalleled U.S. influence in the 1990s and 2000s, regional powers still retained the ability to cooperate separately from and occasionally in defiance of Washington. Since the mid-

1990s, China, Kazakhstan, then-Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan had met to coordinate on regional security challenges. While the five states publicly and privately discussed a "joint struggle against international terrorism, religious extremism, and national separatism," they also decried—as they did in a declaration issued at a summit in Dushanbe in 2000—"intervention into internal affairs of other states… under the pretext of 'humanitarian intervention' and 'human rights protection'" (*TASS* 2000). The grouping added Uzbekistan in 2001 and took on its current name, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (Pomfret 2001). In July 2005, just months after Senator McCain floated a permanent U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, the SCO summit in Almaty called upon "the relevant participating states of the antiterrorist coalition [operating in Afghanistan] to set a deadline" for their presence in the region (Shanghai Cooperation Organization 2005).

Pakistan—along with India—initially joined the grouping as observers for the first time at that SCO summit in 2005. Pakistan would remain an SCO observer until it secured full membership in 2017.[1] The inclusion of both South Asian rivals was and is often understood as logrolling with Russia supporting its traditional Indian partner and China doing the same with Pakistan. Adding both states substantially increased the breadth and heft of the SCO, but with a clear danger that "the hostile Indian-Pakistani relationship" might "complicate military and counterterrorism cooperation and intelligence sharing and mak[e] it far more difficult to reach decisions by consensus" (Stronski and Sokolsky 2020, 18).

Pakistan's full membership in the SCO occurred during a period of broader signals by Moscow of its willingness to deepen its security and defense ties with Pakistan, which had been minimal since the 1970s. While traditionally Russia sought to avoid jeopardizing its more significant security and defense relationship with India, concerns about the growing extent of U.S.-India defense cooperation appear to have caused Russia to reconsider somewhat that past self-restraint.

[1] Mongolia received SCO observer status before India or Pakistan. Iran also joined as an observer in 2005.

While Russian visitors had indicated the possibility of defense sales to Pakistan as early as the mid-1990s, such post-Cold War transfers began modestly and involved only Mi-17 dual-use helicopters (Kotov 1996; *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily* 2004). Reportedly in response to Indian concerns, Russia initially withheld permission for several years for Beijing to use Russian-origin RD-93 jet engines in China's sale of its co-developed FC-1/JF-17 fighter aircraft to Pakistan. During the 2000s, though, China was Moscow's largest defense customer and Moscow eventually relented under combined Chinese and Pakistani pressure, granting formal approval for the RD-93 re-export in 2007 (*The Nation* 2004; Raghuvanshi 2007; *Kommersant* 2007).

Despite these moves, Russian officials were quick to reassure Indian counterparts that Russia did not envision a much broader arms relationship with Pakistan. When asked about future sales of weapons to Pakistan in 2012, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin told Indian reporters, "We are always cooperating with India to ensure safety of the region. We never created trouble for India in the region as compared to other countries. If someone says otherwise, spit in his face." Less evocatively, he said, "We don't do military business with your enemies. We don't transfer any arms to them" (Dikshit 2012b).

In 2014, however, Russia's ambassador to Islamabad said there was no formal embargo or ban on arms exports to Pakistan while acknowledging that the two states had been in negotiations to transfer the Mi-35 attack helicopter (Shaheen 2014). That deal was concluded in 2016, with Russian transfer of the systems in 2017 and their arrival in Pakistan by the following year (*The Daily Times* 2018).

Russian commentators were sometimes explicit in linking these sales to New Delhi's growing defense relationship with Washington. "India could have been more loyal to Russia in the field of military and technical cooperation and saved it from the disagreeable situation in which Moscow on its own has to search for markets to sell military equipment meant for Delhi," an

anonymous Russian diplomat told an Indian newspaper in 2012—in fact only days before Dmitry Rogozin's seemingly contrary assurance that Pakistani sales would not occur (Dikshit 2012a). Similarly, Russian analyst Ruslan Pukhov said during this period, "Delhi's attempts to diversify its supplies of new weapons—increasingly from Western countries—are making Russia flinch. Moscow has explained to Delhi, in no uncertain terms, that it can also diversify its military-technical ties by means of a rapprochement with Pakistan" (Strokan 2012). Even as specific sales were being contemplated publicly, Russian officials in public stressed they did not see any problems for their India relationship in limited sales to Pakistan. "I do not think that the contacts under discussion will cause jealousy on the part of any of the two sides," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told journalists in September 2015. The ironic reading of Ryabkov's statement is evident enough since many observers assessed Russia's outreach to Pakistan was intended to cause India's jealousy rather than avoid it.

Whether the Mi-35 sales were a warning shot to New Delhi or merely a prelude of things to come is difficult to establish given their recency. That helicopter transfer appears to have violated a declared Indian redline against the provision of combat aircraft that Indian officials viewed as applying to the attack helicopter transfer (but not necessarily the dual-use Mi-17s provided earlier) (Laskar 2014). Pakistan has recurrently expressed interest in Russian fighter aircraft since the 1990s, but nothing remotely as provocative as modern fighter systems has been transferred. There have been some reports that Pakistan might upgrade Ukrainian-origin T-80 tanks in Russia, but this would be an incremental improvement of existing systems rather than a new capability (Interfax 2018).

The Mi-35 acquisition was not the only sign of closer Russia-Pakistan partnership that emerged alongside worsening U.S.-Pakistan relations over Afghanistan and troubled U.S.-Russian relations following the February 2014 invasion of the Crimean Peninsula. During a visit by the

Russian defense minister to Pakistan in late 2014—the first such visit since 1969 during the last brief period of Soviet-Pakistani defense cooperation—a bilateral military cooperation agreement was signed (*TASS* 2014; Syed 2014). In 2018, Pakistan and Russia signed additional agreements for enhanced naval cooperation and to permit Pakistani officers to attend Russian military training institutions—viewed contemporaneously as a reaction to the Trump administration's decision to halt U.S. military exchange programs with Pakistan (Kaura 2018; Gul 2018).

Russia-Pakistan exercises also began at a meaningful pace. The "Arabian Monsoon" naval exercise series reportedly centers on counter-narcotics operations and has occurred regularly since 2014 (*The News International* 2018; *The News International* 2021a). In 2021, Russian vessels also participated in the Pakistan Navy's multilateral "Aman" ("peace") exercise, which focuses on transnational threats, immediately prior to that year's bilateral Arabian Monsoon exercise (*TASS* 2021). The militaries additionally have held counterterrorism and special forces-focused "Druzhba" ("friendship") exercises at least six times since 2016 (*The Express Tribune* 2021).

More visible Pakistan-Russia security engagement coincided with shifting Russian views on the Taliban. Moscow had been wary of the Taliban as they emerged in the 1990s. After the U.S. invasion in 2001 and in the context of worsening U.S.-Russian relations, Russia grew wary too of an enduring American footprint in Central Asia. The Taliban insurgency's potential to prevent that inevitably made the movement more palatable to Moscow. Further still, beginning in the mid-2010s, Russia expressed increasing public concern that the Islamic State and its Afghan affiliate, the Islamic State-Khorasan (ISK), was a growing danger to Russian interests. The Taliban feud with ISK brought Russian interests in greater alignment with the Taliban, and contributed to growing Russian support of Pakistani efforts to facilitate talks with the Taliban in the waning years of the Ghani government in Kabul. India was skeptical throughout and found itself "at odds" with the Russian policy trajectory on Afghanistan (Paliwal 2007).

India has also expressed its skepticism about Pakistan-Russia security cooperation more broadly. India's ambassador to Russia Pankaj Saran told the Russian media in October 2016, shortly after the first "Druzhba" exercise, "We have conveyed our views to the Russian side that military cooperation with Pakistan which is a state that sponsors and practices terrorism as a matter of state policy is a wrong approach and it will only create further problems" (Jacob 2016). India's stated concerns may be one reason why thus far the publicly disclosed scope of the military exercises have been so non-provocative, focused on missions such as counterterrorism or counter-narcotics that are comparatively benign.

It is certainly possible that the Ukraine invasion may halt or pause even the relatively low-level Pakistan-Russia bilateral defense relationship. Reequipping Russian forces, rather than arming new customers like Pakistan, may be a priority for Russian defense industry, especially as it struggles to indigenously produce or otherwise procure items that it previously would have drawn from suppliers that have now sanctioned Moscow. It remains uncertain whether Russia can maintain even its modest exercise series with Pakistan given enormous Russian troop and equipment commitments in Ukraine. Finally, whether Pakistan will be willing to continue high-visibility associations with the Russian military in this environment is far from certain as well. Pakistan's own fiscal situation is under profound strains in 2022, in part because of the post-Ukraine international economic environment, limiting the allure of any substantial defense acquisitions, including Russian-origin defense hardware.

The Ukraine Invasion, Pakistani Turmoil, and the Future of Russia-Pakistan Relations

Imran Khan became Pakistan's prime minister in August 2018. While Khan managed to improve relations with the United States toward the end of the Trump administration, Khan had no success in building personal rapport with Joe Biden after he took office in 2021. Khan's senior

officials appeared to grow increasingly irritated that Biden was unwilling even to give Khan the courtesy of a publicized telephone call. Khan's national security advisor, Moeed Yusuf, said in early August 2021, "If a phone call is a concession, if a security relationship is a concession, Pakistan has options" (Manson 2021). By the end of the month, Pakistan and Russia announced that Khan and Putin had spoken on the phone, the first of several such calls prior to Khan's February 2022 visit to Moscow (Khan 2021). That visit was supposed to be Khan's historic moment, but the symbolism was overtaken by the Ukraine crisis and any substantive cooperation—or, at a minimum, tangible public deliverables or agreements—were derailed entirely by Russia's invasion of Ukraine just as Khan was arriving in Moscow.

Khan, for his part, was struggling with a multifaceted political crisis at home—a crisis he publicly blamed on U.S. anger regarding his Russia outreach. When he returned from Moscow that crisis brought with it the collapse of his government, through a successful no-confidence motion that Khan attributed to a Pakistan Army-led conspiracy against him (motivated he suggested by the Army's desire to assuage U.S. concerns). The evidentiary basis for Khan's beliefs is beyond the scope of this article, but the Pakistan Army is not inherently hostile to Russia despite Khan's allegations. The Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa made an official visit to Moscow in April 2018, and generally oversaw the continued improvement in the relationship in more recent years. While General Bajwa felt compelled to give public remarks against the Ukraine invasion, they were measured in tone. As American analyst Tamanna Salikuddin has written, "Bajwa's statements on Ukraine at the Islamabad dialogue were clearly aimed at mollifying the United States while still keeping the door open to Russia" (Cookman, et al., 2022).

The collapse of Khan's government though did not quell Pakistan's political instability. Instead, the new coalition government inherited an economic crisis that was in substantial part attributable to the commodity and energy shortages triggered by the Russian invasion. Perceived

economic mismanagement combined with public sympathy for Imran Khan has left the new government on shaky ground, making Imran Khan's return possible if not probable at some future date.

If he does return, Khan may be intrigued by the possibility of defying U.S. pressure by again embracing Russia. Yet it is impossible to tell whether Russia will be in a position to reciprocate. Will Vladimir Putin still be in charge? Will Russia be an economic mess because of the global sanctions regime? Will Russia's relationship with China grow even tighter in the face of Western pressure over Ukraine? While some scenarios make closer Pakistan-Russia relations more likely than others, the current state of great power politics is too fluid to permit accurate predictions.

Pakistan is too small to mold the structure of international politics by itself. It instead is forced to navigate within a structure set by others, working to carve out the best deal that it can. Pakistani policy is not entirely reactive, but Pakistan's enduring strategic goals of competing with India and ensuring a non-hostile regime in Afghanistan require resources beyond those Pakistan can muster on its own. Pakistan achieving its stated foreign policy goals then requires not just adroit foreign policy but also good luck. If Russia emerges as a de facto client state of China, then Russia's India ties are likely to attenuate and its Pakistan ties may improve. But Russia's ability to help Pakistan independently will be reduced as Moscow's own stature in international politics is diminished by its Ukraine missteps. Otherwise, the Russia-Pakistan relationship is likely to remain what it has been for some time—a modest source of aid, technology, and arms for Pakistan to cultivate when its relationship with Washington is sour.

The Russia-Pakistan relationship has not transformed Pakistan's situation in the past and is unlikely to do so in the future. Russia does not offer an escape from Pakistan's grand strategic predicaments. Those who argue Moscow can do so are ignoring the geopolitical and geoeconomics constraints facing Russia and Pakistan in the 21st century.

REFERENCES

Achakzai, Jan. 2022. "PM's Visit to Russia Ill-Timed." *The News International*, February 14

Agence France Presse. 1999 "Russia to help launch Pakistani research satellite." April 29.

Ahsan, Syed Junaid. 2004. "Putin's Russia: Relations with Pakistan." *Pakistan Horizon* 57, no. 2: 63-75.

Bank of Russia, 2022. "External Sector Statistics." Accessed June 24, https://www.cbr.ru/eng/statistics/macro_itm/svs/.

Bantin, Vyacheslav. 1999. "Yeltsin, Nawaz Sharif Support Stability, Respect for UN." *TASS*, April 20.

Bhutta, Zafar. 2016. "Pakistan's $2 billion LNG Pipeline Project Hits a Snag." *The Express Tribune*. January 13.

Bhutta, Zafar. 2022. "Talks Under Way for Kazakhstan Gas Pipeline," *Dawn*, January 16.

Bolsinger, Diana. 2021-2022. "Not at Any Price: LBJ, Pakistan, and Bargaining in an Asymmetric Intelligence Relationship." *Texas National Security Review* 5, no. 1: 55-80.

Bureau of Intelligence and Research. 1973. "Intelligence Note RNAN–9 Prepared in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research," Washington, February 15, 1973. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. E-8, *Documents on South Asia, 1973-1976*, doc. 107.

Central Intelligence Agency, 1972. *Indo-Soviet Relations*, December 4, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP85T00875R001100130127-2.pdf.

Central Intelligence Agency. 1974. *The President's Daily Brief*. October 12, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0006007840.pdf.

Central Intelligence Agency. 1979. "Communist Aid Activities in Non-Communist Less-Developed Countries 1978: A Research Paper." September, https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000499889.pdf.

Cookman, Colin, et al, 2022. "What's Next for Pakistan's Politics After Ouster of Imran Khan?" Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace.

Coughlin, William. 1969. "Soviet Tanks for Pakistan Stir India," *Washington Post*, March 19.

Dawn. 2015. "Pakistan, Russia sign agreement for construction of North-South gas pipeline." October 16.

Dawn. 2020. "The Foreign Policy of Liaquat Ali Khan." October 17.

Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily. 2004. "Pakistan Moves to New Era of Defense Expansion." October 7.

Dikshit, Sandeep. 2012a. "Growing Russia-Pakistan Ties a Reality that India Will Have to Live With." *The Hindu*. October 8.

Dikshit, Sandeep. 2012b. "We Will Not Sell Arms to Pakistan, Says Russia." *The Hindu*, October 14.

Embassy of Pakistan, Moscow. 2022. "Pakistan-Russia Relations." Accessed June 26. http://parepmoscow.com/en/pakistan-russia-relations/.

Fair, C. Christine. 2014. *Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army's Way of War.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Gazprom, 2019. "Gazprom and Inter State Gas Systems sign Memorandum of Understanding." February 6, http://www.gazprom.com/press/news/2019/february/article474543/.

Geo TV. 2017. "Cabinet Approves Pak-Russia Power Project in Jamshoro." October 4. https://www.geo.tv/latest/161074-cabinet-approves-pak-russia-power-project-in-jamshoro.

Gul, Ayaz. 2018. "Pakistan, Russia Sign Rare Military Cooperation Pact." *Voice of America.* August 8.

Hanif, Muhammad. 2013. "Pakistan-Russia Relations: Progress, Prospects and Constraints." *IPRI Journal* 13, no. 2.

Haqqani, Husain. 2013. *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding.* New York: Public Affairs.

Interfax. 2018. "Pakistan to upgrade its Ukrainian tanks in Russia - Pakistani corporation's deputy chief (Part 2)." Russia & CIS General Newswire, April 24.

Iqbal, Anwar. 2000. "Pakistan Defends Chechen Leader's Visit." *United Press International*, February 15.

Isaad, Haneea, and Simon Nicholas. 2022. "After the Invasion." *Dawn*, March 5.

Ivanov, Ivan. 1999. "Russia, Pakistan praise agreement on economic cooperation." *TASS*, April 19.

Jacob, Jayanth. 2016. "Wargames with Pak a wrong approach, India tells Russia." *Hindustan Times*, October 12.

Kaura, Viney. 2018. "Russia signs naval cooperation deal with Pakistan." *Firstpost*, August 3.

Khan, Israr. 2019. "Pakistan signs $10 bn gas pipeline agreement with Russia." *The News International*. February 7.

Khan, Israr. 2022. "Govt Finalises Three Chinese Firms for Revival of PSM." *The News International*, May 20.

Khan, Muhammad Nawaz. 2019. "Pakistan-Russia Relations Redux: From Estrangement to Pragmatism." *IPRI Journal* 19, no. 1.

Khan, Sanaullah. 2021. "In call with Putin, PM Imran stresses coordinated approaches to evolving Afghan situation." *Dawn*, August 26.

Khan, Tanvir Ahmed. 2012. "To Russia, with Love." *The Express Tribune*, February 12.

Kiani, Khaleeq. 2016. "Russia to join CASA-1000, set up 600 MW Plant in Jamshoro." *Dawn*, October 6.

Kissinger, Henry. 1973. "Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon," Washington, March 7, 1973, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. E-8, *Documents on South Asia, 1973-1976*, doc. 111.

Kommersant. 2007. "Russian engines will fly to Pakistan." August 4.

Koreshi, Samiullah. 2004. *Diplomats and Diplomacy: Story an Era, 1947-1987*. Islamabad: Khursheed Printers. 2004).

Kotov, Leonid. 1996. "First three MI-17 helicopters arrive in Pakistan." *TASS*, May 15.

Kux, Dennis. 2001. *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies.* Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press.

Laskar, Rezaul Hasan. 2014. "India draws 'red line' on Russia-Pakistan deal as Deputy PM gets set to visit." *The Daily Mail* [UK], June 13.

Malik, Hafeez. 1994. *Soviet-Pakistan Relations and Post-Soviet Dynamics, 1947-92.* London: Macmillan.

Manson, Katrina. 2021. "Pakistan's security adviser complains Joe Biden has not called Imran Khan." *Financial Times*, August 3.

Masood, Alauddin. 2018. "On a Friendly Track." *The News International*, July 8.

Molnar, Gergely. 2022. "Economics of Gas Transportation by Pipeline and LNG." In *Palgrave Handbook of International Energy Economics,* 23-57. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mustafa, Khalid. 2022. "$3 bn Stream Gas Pipeline: Pak-Russia Talks Remain Inconclusive Over Sovereign Guarantees." *The News International*. February 11.

New York Times. 1951. "Pakistan Links a 'Certain Foreign Country' to Conspiracy to Set Up Communist State." March 22.

Oehlert, Benjamin. 1968a. "Telegram from the Ambassador to Pakistan (Oehlert) to President Johnson," Rawalpindi, August 5, 1968. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. 25, *South Asia*, doc. 508.

Oehlert, Benjamin. 1968b. "Telegram from the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State," Rawalpindi, August 24, 1968. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. 25, *South Asia*, doc. 511.

Owais, Muhammad. 2007. "Pakistan-Russia Relations: Economic and Political Dimensions." *Pakistan Horizon* 60, no. 2.

Paliwal, Avinash. 2017. "New Alignments, Old Battlefield: Revisiting India's Role in Afghanistan." Carnegie India, June 15.

Pomfret, John. 2001. "Asian Leaders Target Muslim Extremists." *Washington Post*, June 16.

Press Trust of India. 2022. "Pak PM Imran to take up agenda of 2 mega gas pipeline projects in Russia." *Business Standard*, February 17.

Raghuvanshi, Vivek. 2007. "India Tries To Block Engine for JF-17," *Defense News*, January 22.

Rais, Rasul B. 1991. "Pakistan in the Regional and Global Power Structure." *Asian Survey* 31, no. 4: 378-392.

Raman, B. 2010. "The Chechen Terror," *Outlook*, March 31.

Rashid, Ahmed. 2010. *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil, and Fundamentalism in Central Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Richter, Paul and Alex Rodriguez. 2012. "Chinese Quite Pakistan-Iran Pipeline." *Los Angeles Times*, March 15.

Saunders, Harold. 1973. "Memorandum of Conversation," Washington, September 18, 1973, 11a-12:45p. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. E-8, *Documents on South Asia, 1973-1976*, doc. 147.

Saunders, Harold and John Holdridge. 1972. "Memorandum from Harold Saunders and John Holdridge of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger)," Washington, November 8, 1972. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. E-7, *Documents on South Asia, 1969-1972*, doc. 311.

Shah, Adnan Ali. 2001. "Pakistan-Russia Relations: Post-Cold War Era." *Strategic Studies* 21, no. 2.

Shaheen, Sardar Sikander. 2014. "Pakistan in Talks with Russia for Purchase of Mi-35 Copters." *The Daily Times*, June 11.

Shahzeb, Adil, and Anwar Iqbal. 2022. "At Height of Crisis, Imran Regrets Ukraine Escalation." *Dawn*. February 25.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization. 2005. "Declaration by the Heads of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," Astana, July 5, 2005, http://eng.sectsco.org/load/197543/ (accessed March 11, 2019).

Shukla, Vinay. 1999. "Russia in South Asia: A View from India." In Gennady Chufrin, ed., *Russia and Asia: The Emerging Security Agenda*. Sweden: SIPRI.

Sober, Sidney. 1973. "Telegram 1608 From the Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State," Islamabad, February 24, 1973. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, vol. E-8, *Documents on South Asia*, 1973-1976, doc. 110.

Sputnik. 2015. "Russia-Pakistan Military Cooperation Not Threatening Relations With India." September 9.

State Bank of Pakistan. 2022. "Net Inflow of Foreign Private Investment." Accessed June 24. https://www.sbp.org.pk/ecodata/NIFP_Arch/index.asp.

Strokan, Sergei. 2012. "Pakistan and Russia Move Closer Toward Military Cooperation." *Russia Beyond*, October 10.

Stronski, Paul, and Richard Sokolsky. 2020. *Multipolarity in Practice: Understanding Russia's Engagement with Regional Institutions*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Syed, Baqir Sajjad. 2014. "Pakistan, Russia sign landmark defence cooperation agreement." *Dawn*. November 21.

Synovitz, Ron. 2005. "Afghanistan: How Would Permanent U.S. Bases Impact Regional Interests?" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, February 23.

Tankel, Stephen. 2018. "Beyond the Double Game: Lessons from Pakistan's Approach to Islamist Militancy." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 41, no. 4: 545-575.

TASS. 2000. "Shanghai Five approve of special services cooperation." *TASS*. July 5.

TASS. 2014. "Shoigu to pay first visit to Pakistan to sign military cooperation agreement." November 19.

TASS. 2021. "Three Russian ships enter Arabian Sea for Aman-2021 exercise." February 15.

The Daily Times. 2018. "Pakistan begins receiving advanced attack helicopters from Russia." April 16.

The Express Tribune. 2011. "Foreign Firms Express Interest in Thar Coal." November 1.

The Express Tribune. 2013. "Russia Offers Funds to Revive Pakistan Steel Mills." August 1.

The Express Tribune. 2021. "Pak-Russia joint military exercise Druzhba-VI concludes." October 9.

The Nation. 2004. "No aircraft engines for Pakistan: Russia." November 30.

The News International. 2018. "Pakistan, Russia navies conduct bilateral exercise." December 1.

The News International. 2021a. "Pak, Russia Navies Conduct ARABIAN MONSOON 2021 Exercise." February 21.

The News International. 2021b. "Russian Experts to Help Modernise Steel Mills." April 7.

U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2022. "International." Accessed June 24. https://www.eia.gov/international/overview/world.

Washington Post. 1968. "Pakistan Confirms Closing of U.S. Base." May 21.

Zaheer, Hasan. 1998. *The Times and Trial of the Rawalpindi Conspiracy, 1951: The First Coup Attempt in Pakistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.