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# Pakistan's Defence Diplomacy: An Analysis of Its Evolving Strategies and Challenges From 2013 to 2022.

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## ABSTRACT

Pakistan's defence diplomacy has undergone significant changes in the past decade. With the evolving global and regional security environment, Pakistan has adapted its strategies to protect its national interests and ensure regional stability. This research article aims to provide an analysis of Pakistan's defence diplomacy from 2013 to 2022. The study examines the key factors that have influenced Pakistan's defence diplomacy and how it has evolved over the years. The research article employs a qualitative research approach, utilizing secondary data sources such as academic articles, policy papers, and government reports. The data is analyzed through a thematic approach to identify the key trends and developments in Pakistan's defence diplomacy. The analysis reveals that Pakistan's defence diplomacy has been shaped by a range of factors, including its relationship with key allies like China and the United States as well as its ongoing conflict with India. The study identifies the major shifts in Pakistan's defence diplomacy strategies, including its efforts to diversify its defence partnerships, increase defence diplomacy, and pursue a more proactive role in regional security initiatives. The research article also highlights the key challenges faced by Pakistan's defence diplomacy, including the impact of domestic politics on foreign policy, resource constraints, and the need to balance its relationship with competing powers in the region.

**Key Words:** Defense, Deterrence, Strategic Vision, Cooperation, Hegemony, IOR.

## Introduction

The year 2013 was a critical year for Pakistan in many ways. It was a year marked by terrorism, political changes, and significant military operations. The country was facing a significant threat from terrorism. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) had become a major security concern, carrying out a series of deadly attacks across the country. The situation was further exacerbated by the ongoing war in

neighbouring Afghanistan and the spill-over effect it was having on Pakistan's security. In response, the Pakistan Army launched several military operations to counter the TTP's threat. The year saw the preparation of Zarb-e-Azb, one of the most significant military operations in Pakistan's history that were initiated in June 2014 and targeted TTP militants in the tribal areas along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. The operation resulted in the elimination of thousands of militants and the destruction of their infrastructure. The year 2013 also marked a significant political transition for Pakistan. The general elections were held in May, and a new political leadership came to power. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) emerged as the single largest party in the National Assembly.

The new government inherited a range of security and economic challenges, including the ongoing threat from terrorism, a deteriorating economy, and energy shortages. In response, the government launched a series of initiatives such as the National Action Plan (NAP), and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) specifically aimed at addressing such issues and boosting economic growth.

Pakistan's defence diplomacy during this period was shaped by these internal and external factors. The country was not only grappling with multiple natures of domestic and regional security challenges but also economic ones. The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan and the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the region added to the complexity of the security environment. In response, Pakistan adopted a multi-faceted approach to its defence diplomacy. The state sought to diversify and re-align its defence partnerships and deepen its cooperation with key allies such as China and the United States.

Pakistan's defence diplomacy during this period was not without its challenges. The country not only faced significant resource constraints, particularly in terms of its defence budget, policy planning & implementation but also various natural hurdles like economic, and diplomatic isolation and the setting of agenda between the military and civilian domains (Zakaria et al., 2019). It also had to navigate a complex and shifting geopolitical landscape, balancing its relationship with competing powers. At the same time, Pakistan was facing criticism from the West in the war against terrorism and extremism.

Historically, the axis of Pakistan's defence diplomacy has mostly been for the acquisition and enhancement of defence capabilities. In this, more attention and resource allocation was towards the land and air force of the country. When terrorism increased in Pakistan and successive negotiations between the government and various groups began to suffer from success and sometimes failure, it had an impact on Pakistan's defence diplomacy as well (Jaffrelot, 2004). The state was forced to devote significant resources towards counter-terrorism efforts, impacting its ability to invest in other areas, including defence modernization. The security situation also raised concerns among Pakistan's regional and global partners, who were hesitant to engage in defence cooperation with Pakistan due to the security risks.

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Pakistan's response to the rising threat of terrorism was multi-faceted. The country adopted a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy that included military operations, law enforcement measures, intelligence gathering, and compliance with United Nation Resolution 1373 and Pakistan's defence diplomacy adapted itself to achieve all these objectives (Khalid, 2022). The impact of these efforts on Pakistan's defence diplomacy was significant. The state was able to demonstrate its commitment to countering terrorism and promoting regional security, which helped to allay the concerns of its partners.

Pakistan also intensified its defence diplomacy efforts by engaging in joint exercises with other countries, establishing new capabilities for law enforcement to counter-terrorism, strengthening new institutions, and enhancing its presence in international security and defence-related platforms for the sake of presenting its point of view on terrorism and extremism and contributing to UN peacekeeping missions (Hunter, 2020).

The impact of terrorism on Pakistan's defence diplomacy was not entirely positive. The state's relations with the United States, in particular, were strained due to concerns over Pakistan's support for militant groups. The US suspended military aid to Pakistan in 2018, citing Pakistan's failure to take action against the Haqqani network (Emily, 2018). Pakistan's relations with India were also impacted during this period. The 2016 Uri attack, led to heightened tensions between the two countries (Kaura, 2020). This, in turn, impacted their ability to engage in defence cooperation and diplomacy.

### **Defence Diplomacy as a Concept**

Defence diplomacy as a concept has grown in prominence and optimism in recent years. See Seng Tan (Leon, 2006) explores the implications for defence policymakers as well as assesses whether or not defence diplomacy is worth pursuing. Defence diplomacy has become increasingly relevant to modern-day geopolitics and can be used to pursue both practical and diplomatic objectives. Despite the potential benefits that can be gained through defence diplomacy, there are also risks associated with it. Understanding these risks is essential for policymakers considering using or pursuing defence diplomacy initiatives and a careful balance should be struck between diplomatic ambition and risk when engaging in defence diplomacy initiatives.

Andrew Cottey (Forster, 2004) presents a comprehensive analysis of the changing nature of defence diplomacy and the evolving role of military cooperation and assistance. The author argues that in today's world, defence diplomacy goes beyond traditional state-to-state interactions and encompasses a wide range of activities that aim to build trust, promote regional stability, and enhance security cooperation. Cottey identifies several key drivers of this shift, including globalization, the changing nature of security threats, and the growing

importance of non-state actors. Further examines the role of military cooperation and assistance in this new era of defence diplomacy, highlighting the need for flexible and adaptable approaches that can respond to the complex security challenges facing today's world.

John (Blaxland, 2014) makes a compelling case for the importance of defence diplomacy in contemporary international relations by arguing that defence diplomacy, which involves using military forces to build relationships with other countries, can be a valuable tool for promoting regional stability and enhancing Australia's security. The author suggests that defence diplomacy can help to build trust and confidence between countries and that this can be particularly important in the Asia-Pacific region, where tensions are high and security challenges are increasingly complex. The need for Australia to be proactive in its defence diplomacy efforts and to work collaboratively with other countries to address common security challenges is a persuasive argument for the importance of defence diplomacy.

Gregory (Winger, 2014) presents a novel approach towards understanding the role of defence diplomacy in international relations by contending that defence diplomacy is a "velvet gauntlet" that is both firm and gentle and that it is a necessary tool for promoting peace and security. The 'theory', emphasizes the need for military power and the use of force but also recognizes the importance of soft power and diplomacy in achieving strategic goals. According to the author, defence diplomacy can help build trust and confidence between countries, and it can be especially effective in addressing complex security challenges.

Nick (Bisley, 2014b) presents a nuanced analysis of the role of defence diplomacy in promoting security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Bisley argues that while defence diplomacy has the potential to be a valuable tool for building trust and cooperation between countries, there are also significant limitations to its effectiveness. The author suggests that defence diplomacy is most effective when it is used in conjunction with other tools of statecraft, such as economic and diplomatic engagement. The author also identifies several challenges to effective defence diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region, including historical tensions, territorial disputes, and strategic mistrust. Despite these challenges, however, the author remains optimistic about the potential of defence diplomacy to promote regional security and suggests that continued engagement and dialogue between countries are essential to achieving this goal.

Brendan (Taylor et al., 2014b) examines the role of the Shangri-La Dialogue, an annual security conference in Singapore, in promoting defence diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. He argues that the Shangri-La Dialogue has played a key role in institutionalizing defence diplomacy in the region, by providing a forum for dialogue and cooperation between regional powers. The author suggests that the conference has helped to build trust and confidence between countries, and has facilitated the development of regional security mechanisms and frameworks. Taylor also identifies several challenges to the continued effectiveness of the

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Shangri-La Dialogue, including shifting geopolitical dynamics and the rise of non-traditional security threats.

**Research Question**

What are the key strategies and challenges of Pakistan's defence diplomacy from 2013 to 2023, and how have they evolved in response to changing regional and global security dynamics?

**Research Methodology**

A multi-pronged approach has been utilized for the collection of data. Initially, a comprehensive review of existing literature on the topic was conducted to gain a thorough understanding. This helped to identify gaps in the literature and areas that required further exploration. Additionally, a Google survey was designed and distributed to a sample population (mostly experts and authors of the domain) to gather primary data. The survey was carefully constructed to elicit the necessary information that would help to answer the research question. The data obtained from the survey were analyzed to draw conclusions and make recommendations. This methodology allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the research question, drawing on both secondary and primary sources. The triangulation of data from different sources increased the reliability and validity of the findings and enabled the identification of key themes and patterns in the data.

**Defence Diplomacy**

Defence diplomacy involves a range of activities and interactions, including military-to-military dialogues, joint training and exercises, defence trade and procurement, and participation in international peacekeeping missions (Cotter & Forster, 2004). It is a type of diplomacy with specific activities that are carried out by two or more countries with mutual consent. Numerous authors, experts in the domain and states have discussed their details according to their perspectives. The author compiled a list of those activities according to their importance and mentions in the current scholarship of the domain:-

Sr.	Activities under the ambit of defence diplomacy
1.	Bilateral/multilateral contacts between military and defence officials
2.	Defence attaches
3.	Joint military exercises
4.	Defence cooperation agreements, provision of military equipment, MoUs, treatise
5.	Interoperability among all branches of armed forces
6.	Education and military training
7.	United Nations Peacekeeping operations

8.	Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, Search and rescue operations
9.	Participation in events organized by military institutions, conferences, parades and (tattoos, is a new trend and on the rise, the UK termed it cultural defence diplomacy).

Source: Purpose-built table compiled by the author during the literature review with the help of a software application.

Cooperativeness: defence diplomacy emphasizes cooperation and collaboration with other countries and militaries to achieve common goals and promote regional and global security. It is based on the principle of mutual benefit and recognizes that no country can achieve its defence and security objectives alone (Daalder, 2003). Non-confrontational, defence diplomacy aims to promote peace and stability by reducing tensions and avoiding confrontations with other countries and militaries. It emphasizes confidence-building measures, transparency, and trust-building to prevent misunderstandings and miscalculations that could lead to conflict finally long-term; defence diplomacy is a long-term and sustained effort that requires a commitment to building relationships and engaging with other countries and militaries over time. It involves a range of activities that may not have immediate benefits but contribute to building trust, promoting regional stability, and enhancing national security in the long run.

### **Characteristics of Pakistan's Defence Diplomacy**

Due to the numerous political, ethnic, security, economic and defence-related issues that happened before and after the partition, the direction of Pakistan's foreign policy had to be forced towards the basis of ensuring maximum security and military strength by way of alliance-building, military to military cooperation in capacity building and military modernization (Cheema, 1990). It is for this reason that the defence forces have remained a fundamental component of Pakistan's foreign policy since its independence. The country's defence personnel play an important role in many diplomatic engagements with countries around the world, ranging from counterterrorism and peacekeeping missions to security cooperation, military-to-military assistance & intelligence sharing. In the same way, Pakistan's defence forces have a long history of supporting the country's foreign policy objectives by providing various types of military assistance to foreign and regional allies, peacekeeping force to the United Nations, participation in international efforts to counter terrorism & humanitarian assistance (Gledhill, 2021). All these measures together have an impact on the external security environment of the country.

Over the past several decades, Pakistan's defence forces have played a pivotal role in achieving this goal by establishing a strong military presence in the region and strengthening cooperation with its key regional allies behind this approach there is a more significant role of internal and external conditions than leadership. Pakistan is turning towards more sophisticated forms of diplomacy and cooperation to preserve its national interests and enhance its global reputation. In

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recent years, Pakistan has signed numerous agreements of geo-economics & geostrategic nature with its regional and global partners and established several strategic alliances (Nurmuhammedov, 2017). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in 2013, aimed at improving transportation infrastructure and energy production, Turkmenistan Afghanistan Pakistan India gas pipeline agreement in 2015 to bring natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India. Quadrilateral Coordination Group agreement in 2016 (Niha, 2017) to promote peace talks between the Afghan government and Taliban in Afghanistan, China Pakistan Free Trade Agreement Phase II in 2019 to further boost economic ties between China and Pakistan. Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline agreements in 2013 and the provision of security services at the FIFA world cup 2022 in Doha are a few examples and there was a role of Pakistan's defence institutions behind all of them in making them successful.

These efforts have been very successful and have led to several significant achievements on the security front in recent years. It is important for Pakistan to carefully monitor the use of its military resources to maintain the country's security and its regional and international standing. Apart from this, Pakistan has always tried to play the role of mediator between the Muslim countries of the world especially Gulf countries and Iran, and most of it is done through Pakistan's defence diplomacy (RUSI, 2017).

Similarly, defence cooperation, mutual military exercises, port visits, and defence cooperation with Russia are also some important initiatives during this era. The strategic relations between Pakistan and Russia have been characterized by a mix of cooperation, competition, and distrust since the two countries established diplomatic ties in 1948. After the end of the Cold War, the relations between the two countries improved gradually, and in 2012, both upgraded their relations to the level of a strategic partnership (Hassan, 2021). The two countries have been working to enhance cooperation in the fields of defence, energy, trade, and culture. In 2016, both countries signed a military cooperation agreement, and in 2018, conducted their first joint military exercise in Pakistan.

If Pakistan's approach toward adopting defence diplomacy as a policy is evaluated on a few basic principles, then there is scope for further improvement. Pakistan's defence diplomacy as a policy must accomplish a few requirements which it seems are not fulfilled. Clarity, a good policy should be clear and easily understandable by all stakeholders, including policymakers, implementers, and beneficiaries. Feasibility, a good policy should be practical and feasible to implement. It should take into account the available resources, the capacity of the implementing agencies, and the social, economic, and political realities of the context in which it is being implemented. Effectiveness, a good policy should have a clear and measurable goal, and it should be designed to achieve that goal efficiently and effectively. It should be based on evidence and research, and it should be evaluated periodically to ensure that it is achieving the intended

outcomes. Inclusivity, a good policy should be inclusive and equitable, taking into account the needs and perspectives of all stakeholders.

Call it misfortune or something else, Pakistan has neither an official defence policy nor any official document that describes the purpose, scope, definition and goals of Pakistan's defence diplomacy, both documents are instrumental.

As many countries as there are in the world, developed or developing, the goals and objectives of defence policy and defence diplomacy are not only published regularly but the opinions of all stakeholders are also taken into consideration. Unfortunately, this is not the case in Pakistan. So one of the biggest obstacles will remain intact. It needs to be seen, it needs to be worked on.

The benefit of doing this is that Pakistan's defence diplomacy will be better able to deal with emerging challenges, fulfil the requirement of being a comprehensive policy and achieve various sustainable benefits and it will become multidimensional. By incorporating a comprehensive strategy and policy it will be able to better involve and engage with a variety of actors, including other militaries, civilian governments, international organizations, and non-state actors.

## **Evolving Strategies**

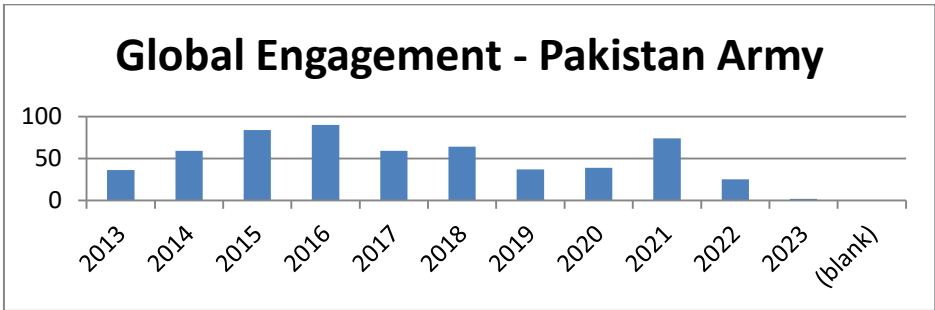
Pakistan's strategies towards defence diplomacy have evolved significantly in recent years, as the country seeks to adapt to changing geopolitical realities and address new security challenges. One key development has been a greater emphasis on regional cooperation and engagement, particularly with neighbouring countries. For example, Pakistan has sought to enhance its military-to-military cooperation with China and other regional powers and has also sought to improve relations with Afghanistan and Iran, to address shared security concerns such as terrorism, extremism and developments in the Indian Ocean region (Farid, 2020). The state took several measures with the international community to better equip itself to counter such apprehensions. National Action Plan in 2014 includes measures to crack down on terrorist financing and strengthen law enforcement agencies addressing issues of hate speech and extremist ideologies. Military operations like Zarb-e-Azb, Radul-ul-Fasaad, intelligence cooperation, particularly with the United States, intelligence information sharing, joint military operations, De-radicalization programs, psychological counselling and enhancement of Pakistan's naval presence.

Another important aspect of Pakistan's evolving defence diplomacy strategy has been a greater focus on multilateralism and global engagement. In recent years, Pakistan has become more active in regional and international organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the United Nations (UN), and has sought to use these platforms to promote its interests and address key security challenges (Khetran, 2019). Additionally, Pakistan has sought to strengthen its partnerships with Western powers, such as the United States, through initiatives like the US-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue.



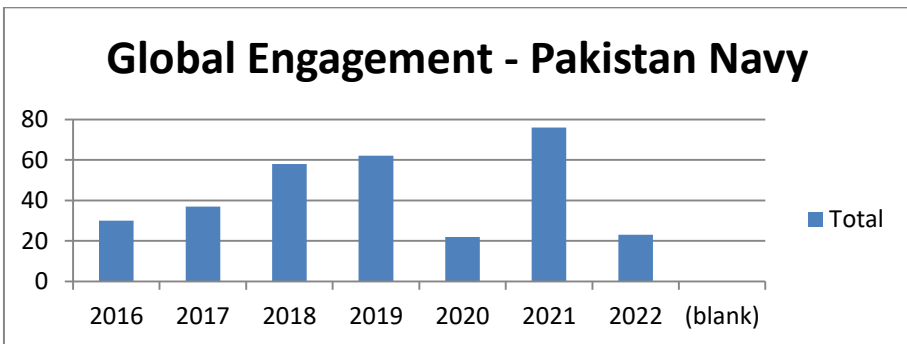
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The graph depicts the number of countries visited on yearly basis by military leadership as part of its defence diplomacy to increase military-to-military cooperation, discuss terrorism-related issues, mutual understanding, intelligence sharing & increased border coordination.



Source: Compiled official press releases of ISPR from 2013 to 2023

In the same way, this graph depicts the number of countries visited on yearly basis by Naval leadership and naval command ships as part of its defence diplomacy to increase cooperation in the maritime sector, port calls toward China, the United States, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates to strengthen bilateral ties and promote maritime security and stability, overseas deployment in the African region, command of CTF-150 and humanitarian assistance.



Source: Compiled official press releases of ISPR from 2013 to 2023

Pakistan's evolving defence diplomacy strategy has also included a greater emphasis on indigenous defence production and technology development. The country has invested heavily in developing its military technologies, including MILGEM class corvettes, missile systems, and drones, and has sought to use these capabilities to enhance its strategic position in the region (Shah, 2021). These

evolving strategies of defence diplomacy in Pakistan reflect the country's efforts to adapt to changing geopolitical realities and address new security challenges, while also enhancing its military capabilities and building strategic partnerships with other countries.

## **Challenges**

Pakistan's defence diplomacy has been facing several challenges. The state has been dealing with various security threats, including terrorism, border disputes, and regional instability, fighting a protracted counterterrorism campaign against various militant groups operating within the borders. The state has responded to such security challenges by enhancing its defence and security cooperation with the world, undertaking military operations against militants and strengthening its border security measures. These challenges have made it difficult for Pakistan to maintain its defence diplomacy and establish strong relationships with other countries.

## **Terrorism**

One of the biggest multifaceted challenges faced by Pakistan's defence diplomacy is terrorism. The country has been a victim of terrorism for many years, and it has affected its relationship with other countries. The country was plagued by a wave of terrorist attacks, particularly in its urban areas, resulting in significant loss of civilian lives and damage to property (Abbasi, 2013). The menace also shook the roots of Pakistan's economy. Destruction of infrastructure, stoppage of foreign direct investment, stoppage of industries, business activities, expenditure on military operations, and expenditure on capacity building of law enforcement agencies, were some of the difficulties. At that time, Pakistan also had to struggle at the foreign policy level and defence diplomacy had its role in this. There was a time when, Pakistan has been accused of not doing enough to combat terrorism, which led to strained relations with the United States and India (Haider, 2011).

Conversely, the state, along with the defence forces took several measures to address the issue. The military played a crucial role in eliminating terrorist groups and their hideouts from the tribal areas, while the navy provided support in securing the coastal areas. The air force provided air cover to ground troops during operations against terrorists (Hafeez, 2022). The implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) in 2014 was a significant step towards the eradication of terrorism, which included measures such as enhanced intelligence sharing, improved border management, and the establishment of military courts. The government also initiated several programs for the rehabilitation of the affected areas and to address the root causes of terrorism, such as poverty and lack of education (Javed, 2021). Despite some setbacks, the concerted efforts of the government and efficient defence diplomacy resulted in a significant reduction in

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the number of terrorist attacks in recent years, indicating progress in the struggle against terrorism.

### **Border Disputes**

Pakistan has been involved in several border disputes with neighbouring countries since its creation in 1947. The major border disputes in Pakistan include the Kashmir Issue, Durand Line, Sir Creek, Siachen Glacier and Line of Control. These matters, because of their prevalence and complexity, have become a challenge for Pakistan's defence diplomacy. Pakistan shares borders with China, India, Iran and Afghanistan. Except for the side of the border in the northeast with China, the remaining sides of the borders have been the source of several disputes, which have affected Pakistan's relationship with these countries (Mir & Watkins, 2022). The dispute over Kashmir, Sir Creek and International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) with India has been a major challenge for Pakistan's defence diplomacy. The two countries have fought several wars over Kashmir, and the dispute remains unresolved. Apart from the rest of the disputes, a strategically and economically important issue is the Sir Creek area and its impact on the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and Continental Shelves due to the potential of resources there and the establishment of maritime boundaries between Pakistan and India.

Pakistan's coastline is 990 kilometres long, which is bordered by India on one side and Iran on the other. Pakistan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is about 240,000 square kilometres, with an additional continental shelf area of about 50,000 square kilometres (NIO, 2020). Thus the total maritime zone of Pakistan is more than 30% of the land area. The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) has the potential to enhance naval and maritime capacity and support the economy of Pakistan. Similarly, the border dispute with Afghanistan has also affected Pakistan's relationship with its neighbour. Pakistan has been working towards resolving these disputes through diplomatic channels.

Pakistan's EEZ provides a strategic advantage in terms of security, enabling the country to monitor and protect its maritime borders from external threats. The Pakistan Navy maintains a strong presence in the EEZ, which helps maintain national security. The EEZ provides the country with exclusive control over the natural resources within its maritime territory. This includes fish stocks, minerals, and hydrocarbons, giving Pakistan greater economic control and opportunities for development (MFF Pakistan, 2016). Economically, Pakistan needs to strengthen its fishing industry and oil and gas exploration capacity so that it can contribute towards energy security and help reduce the state's dependence on imported energy and maritime transport, as it will provide Pakistan with strategic access to international sea routes. It allows the country to earn revenue by leasing its ports and shipping lanes for commercial purposes.

## **Regional Instability**

Regional instability is another challenge faced by Pakistan's defence diplomacy. The instability in Afghanistan and the Middle East has had a significant impact on Pakistan's security situation. The rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the region has also posed a threat to Pakistan's security (Johnson, 2016). Pakistan through its defence diplomacy is working towards promoting regional stability, promoting peace in Afghanistan and has been working towards improving its relationship with Iran.

## **Conclusion**

Pakistan's intensified defence diplomacy efforts helped to demonstrate the country's commitment to promoting regional security. India has been pursuing a protracted strategy to diplomatically isolate Pakistan on the international front. This approach has posed a significant challenge to Pakistan's conventional diplomatic efforts. It is important to note that Pakistan's traditional diplomacy may not have been sufficient to counteract India's aggressive approach, given the complex nature of the international arena. Substantial support of defence diplomacy efforts played a crucial role in mitigating India's diplomatic offensive. Evolving strategies of Pakistan's defence diplomacy such as emphasis on regional cooperation, global engagement, joint military exercises, interoperability in the naval and military domain, participation in defence and security-related international forums, port calls and participation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief activities at the regional level are proving to be fruitful. All it needs is a comprehensive well-documented and coordinated policy approach involving stakeholders from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Defence, think tanks and academia. For instance and confidence building measure if Pakistan and India successfully resolve the Sir Creek issue through defence diplomacy it will be a great achievement between the two countries on the foreign policy front.

## **Recommendations**

### **Defence Policy**

In light of the absence of an officially published defence policy, it is recommended that Pakistan's policymakers prioritize the development of a comprehensive and transparent national defence policy which should be informed by a rigorous analysis of the country's security challenges and objectives and should provide clear guidance on the allocation of resources and the use of defence forces. A well-defined defence policy will not only help Pakistan address its security concerns more effectively but will also enhance its credibility as a responsible member of the international community.

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## **Defence White Paper**

A defence white paper is an important tool for communicating a country's strategic vision, military capabilities, and defence policy objectives to domestic and international audiences. By publishing a defence white paper, Pakistan can enhance transparency and build trust with its partners and stakeholders. Additionally, a defence white paper can serve as a roadmap for the country's defence establishment, providing clear guidance on the allocation of resources, military modernization plans, and the use of military force. The development of a comprehensive and publicly available defence white paper is critical to strengthening Pakistan's national security and enhancing its credibility on the global stage.

## **Institutionalization**

To align with the established norms of the global North, it is recommended that Pakistan undertakes the transformation of its defence diplomacy efforts towards greater institutionalization and inclusivity, with a specific focus on civilian stakeholders. By adopting a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to defence diplomacy, Pakistan can enhance its strategic relationships with both regional and global partners, while also improving the effectiveness of its defence initiatives. Such an approach should aim to broaden the scope of participation in defence decision-making, by incorporating civilian actors and promoting transparency and accountability. Additionally, the institutionalization of defence diplomacy can foster a more stable and predictable environment for regional security cooperation, thereby contributing to a more peaceful and secure South Asian region. The transformation of Pakistan's defence diplomacy efforts into a more inclusive, institutional, and collaborative framework represents a crucial step towards enhancing its national security and positioning itself as a responsible and influential player on the global stage.

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