



**Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS),
Islamabad**

**30 Years of Pakistan-Tajikistan Bilateral
Cooperation: Way Forward to Future Ventures**



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**“30 Years of Pakistan-Tajikistan Diplomatic
Relations: Towards Achieving Future Aspirations”**

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Tajikistan is located in the Central Asian region. It is a landlocked country bordered by Kyrgyzstan to the north, China to the east, Afghanistan to the south, and Uzbekistan to the west



and northwest. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Republic of Tajikistan established diplomatic relations in 1992. This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the two countries diplomatic relations. In terms of economic and national growth, Tajikistan is one of the most rapidly developing countries in Central Asia. Tajikistan's economy has made a remarkable recovery after the COVID 19 pandemic. The country is witnessing remarkable socioeconomic progress and regional collaboration. All this was made possible under the dynamic leadership of His Excellency President Emomali Rahmon.

The nature of relations between Pakistan and Tajikistan has changed in present times, featured with mutual respect and cooperation. There has been a series of state-level visits between the countries' leaders. In international and national organizations, Pakistan and Tajikistan support each other. Both states have inked a series of agreements to strengthen bilateral relations, especially in light of Tajikistan's 2030 National Development Strategy and Pakistan's shifting development goals from geopolitics to geo-economics.



Thought on Diplomacy:

Both countries have a strong desire to work together to maintain regional stability and bilateral cooperation. The visit of Tajik President Emomali Rahmon to Pakistan in 2015 marked a watershed moment in Pakistan-Tajikistan ties. Both countries have inked many cooperative agreements in the areas of energy, security, trade, defence, culture, infrastructure development, and communication. The two sides agreed to expand people-to-people connections and hold frequent delegation exchanges. Counter-terrorism, regional instability, extremism, and the control of people and drug smuggling were among the topics highlighted.

a. Prospects for Economic Cooperation:

Trade and economics are the main aspects of improving state-to-state relations. Pakistan offers Tajikistan a potential transit route to the Arabian Sea and beyond, as well as the quickest route. Tajikistan is also Pakistan's entry point into Central Asia and beyond, into Eastern Europe. In this regard, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project has the potential to enhance trade and revitalize regional cooperation. In the energy industry, Pakistan has a lot of potential to collaborate with Tajikistan, which is the world's third-largest hydroelectric power producer. As a result, the two countries have agreed to expand the CASA-1000 project, enabling the generation of an extra 1000 megawatts of low-cost, ecological-friendly electricity. Both sides also pledged to hold meetings of the Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, and Scientific-Technical Cooperation.



b. Defence Cooperation:

To strengthen defence ties, the two countries have signed several memorandums. The exchange of military forces, training sessions, and joint exercises/drills promoted cooperation in this domain. All agreements were signed to combat terrorism and improve regional security architecture.

c. Multilateral Cooperation:

In terms of multilateral collaboration, Pakistan and Tajikistan share a lot of similar grounds on a variety of regional and international concerns. Their shared membership in the Organization of Islamic Council (OIC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), CICA, and UN has bolstered bilateral collaboration under the auspice of international laws. On various international and regional forums, both countries always support each other. Furthermore, the foreign ministries and diplomatic corps of both countries are contributing to strengthen partnership.

Uplifting Cultural, Academic, and Tourism Linkages:

Cultural and academic ties, as well as people-to-people contacts, draw nations closer. In this aspect, both countries are taking advantage of every opportunity to revive shared cultural ties and develop bridges between our peoples, artists, academia, and institutions. Through numerous exhibitions and events hosted in Tajikistan from time to time, Pakistan is already showcasing its cultural legacy, including art, fashion, and cuisine. Our people also share strong literary and spiritual connections with the followers of great saints such as Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Syed Ali

Hamdani, and Sadruddin Ayni, among others, who preached global and peaceful themes. In Tajikistan, Allama Iqbal is a household name, and his works are incorporated into the country's academic curriculum. Ali Muhammad Khurasani, a well-known Tajik scholar, was awarded 'Pride of Performance' by Pakistan's president in 2015 for his outstanding work on Allama Iqbal's poetry. The Urdu Department of Tajik National University, Dushanbe, has created a Pakistan Study Center. It demonstrates that both sides are engaged in fruitful efforts aimed to enhance bilateral linkages and promote education which are important in present times.

Conclusion:

In a nutshell, Pakistan and Tajikistan have mutual interests in developing regional connectivity, preventing the spread of radicalization, and complementing each other's balancing



roles. As a result, the intellectual foundation for their potential strategic alliance is solid, and both parties have the diplomatic will to make it a reality. Thus, the strategic alliance between Pakistan and Tajikistan will pave the way for regional cooperation between Central and South Asia.



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