

# Strengthening SCO



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***Editor's Note: Yasir Masood is an Islamabad-based Political and Security Analyst, broadcast Journalist and academic. His areas of interest include BRI, CPE, Chinese Affairs and Regional Geopolitics.***

Humanity has and still suffers from the onslaught of global radicalism and extremism, repeatedly by the repressive actions of Western hegemony in the guise of fabricated and franchised terrorism. After 9/11, transitional uncertainties, ideological muddles, conceptual reorientation, and the migration of radical ideologies across borders received further momentum. Along with a frantic drive of economic accentuation, a multi-polar international order has resulted, requiring governments to rethink their security and existence in the modern world.

Against this backdrop, SCO was founded 20 years ago out of the "Shanghai Spirit" to reinvent security architecture, including economic stability, with like-minded countries to nurture an autonomous and inclusive bloc. SCO is guided by the principles of mutual trust and benefit, equality, consultations, proper regard for cultural diversity, and the commitment to cooperate toward shared progress.

Hegemonic states are, nevertheless, actively seeking new methods to expand their power by extending their influence over weaker states as a result of the advancement of fast-forward information technology and

intelligence. Soft power, sanctions, cyberspace control, and the development of biological and psychological warfare, some of which are imperceptible, are integrated with traditional instruments, altering the dynamics and indicators of international political conflicts and struggles.

It is an irrefutable fact that a state's security and stability are prerequisites for long-term economic and trade development. SCO is instrumental in building bridges between states and continents, bolstering economic integration of the regions, and alleviating numerous regional and global challenges as the world undergoes rapid changes unseen in a century.

SCO encompasses over 60% of Eurasia and has a far-reaching positive impact almost on the entire world. Beyond doubt, SCO is a pillar of economy and politics in Eurasia and a game-changer on the global stage. Today, the combined population of the SCO countries exceeds 3.5 billion, covering about 40% of the world's population, and the combined GDP is estimated to exceed 30% of the global GDP and its mutual trade has reached 6 trillion dollars. This year's summit adopted more than 40 resolutions on economics, finance, science and technology, culture, people-to-people exchanges, institution building, and external connections. It also released numerous reports on global food security, international energy security, climate change, and ensuring a secure, stable, and diverse supply chain. Thus, SCO is a beacon of hope to offer more economic sustainability and safeguard the region from security concerns. The multilateral strategy for peace and stability may be the only way for all member nations to make this achievable.

Following the fall of Kabul, Afghanistan is in dire need of aid to avert a humanitarian crisis. Helping the Afghan people necessitates a comprehensive strategy. However, constructive involvement at the SCO in conjunction with the CPEC transit trade routes can also assist Afghanistan in overcoming its current predicament.

SCO and CPEC are complementary to one another. In exchange for their participation in CPEC, Russian, Eurasian, and Central Asian states may offer Pakistan the minerals, gas, and oil it needs to meet its energy needs. In reality, CPEC was a driving force behind Pakistan's entry into SCO, as infrastructural development under CPEC will generate enormous potential for SCO member states. CPEC has the potential to provide the shortest access to commercial and economic networks, especially to the landlocked Central Asian states.

Pakistan's support for regional cooperation is reaffirmed through SCO. Whereas, on the strategic chessboard, this regional bloc offers two major prospects for Pakistan's foreign policy: first, it presents a positive and responsible image around the globe; and second, it helps refute contrived narratives centred on anti-CPEC rhetoric. On the security front, other participants of this multilateral forum may benefit from Pakistan's tireless efforts to eradicate terrorism and extremism of all forms, and manifestations. Peace and security are indivisible. Both are critical for economic development. It is therefore essential that lingering regional disputes are amicably resolved. SCO is expected to do just that in due course.

To give CPEC fresh life, it is imperative to foster collaboration in areas including business, agriculture, research, technology, and social welfare. China expects Pakistan to ensure the safety of Chinese citizens and institutions in Pakistan, as well as the legal rights and interests of Chinese companies. To which, Pakistan's Prime Minister ensured the fool-proof security of the Chinese nationals and companies working in Pakistan. China also commends Pakistan for taking the lead in actively promoting both the Global Development

Initiative and the Global Security Initiative, and will work with Pakistan to advance their implementation. The two sides are expected to further improve two-way communication and collaboration within the UN, SCO, and other multilateral fora to voice developing countries' aversion to bloc confrontation and adherence to multilateralism.

In summary, international forums such as the SCO can certainly help combat the ongoing and impending global economic challenges. Additionally, post-covid-19 and the Russia-Ukraine war have evolved a new shape to state ties. Therefore promoting regional prosperity with local currency trade (a) will give economic identity to each member state of SCO and (b) it will be a major step to fend off regional and global hegemonism.

Humans have always had the urge to triumph over destiny. An undying urge to achieve power is a basic human instinct. If power is then extended to others to form a community of commonality, again with the purpose of sustaining power, we could speak of a 'community of destiny'. So, for better or for worse, humankind is more or less a community of a shared destiny.