



Pakistan Must Stand With China

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Pakistan today finds itself in a complex geopolitical environment where its relationships with major powers are being tested and redefined. The recent growing proximity between Pakistan and the United States, coupled with China's steadfast partnership, presents both opportunities and challenges for our foreign policy. It is imperative that Pakistan maintains cordial relations with all countries, as this is a principle that should guide our diplomacy. However, this must be done without compromising the trust and loyalty of those who have stood by Pakistan through its most difficult times.

History shows that Pakistan has often played on both sides of the field, shifting alliances in pursuit of short-term gains. From the early days of the Cold War to more recent decades, we have witnessed moments when Pakistan stood firmly with one partner only to seek benefits from the other, switching allegiances when it suited immediate needs. This approach has often come at a cost, eroding trust and creating doubts about our long-term commitments.

The launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2013 marked a turning point in our bilateral relations with China. CPEC became the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, symbolizing a new era of economic cooperation and strategic trust between the two countries.





China invested heavily in infrastructure, energy, and connectivity projects in Pakistan, cementing a friendship that has proven resilient in the face of global and regional shifts. It is no secret that America's distance from Pakistan in recent years was partly due to our deepening ties with China.

Recent events have again highlighted China's role as a reliable partner. Pakistan's decisive victory over India was made possible in large part due to Chinese support, including the provision of high-quality fighter jets and other critical assistance. This was not just a matter of military hardware, it was a demonstration of political will & strategic alignment. Yet, the renewed warmth in relations with Washington, particularly during Donald Trump's tenure, has created a situation that could tempt Pakistan to once again shift its loyalties.

Such a move would be a grave mistake. Decision makers must remember that China has been Pakistan's only consistent friend when many global powers, & even much of the Muslim world, chose to distance themselves. President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan, where he announced CPEC as the Belt and Road Initiative's flagship project, was a clear statement of trust & commitment. China has even paid the ultimate price, with Chinese workers losing their lives in Pakistan, yet it remains firmly committed to our partnership.

Pakistan has not always reciprocated this loyalty in full measure. We have failed to provide adequate security to Chinese nationals working in our country, failed to give assurances to their businesses, and at times failed to extend the full measure of support that our Chinese partners deserve. Despite this, China has continued to stand shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan. This steadfastness should not be taken for granted.

Any shift in Pakistan's strategic orientation away from China in pursuit of short-term benefits from other powers would not only be shameful but would also damage our credibility in the eyes of the world. We should take a lesson from our neighbor India, which has demonstrated that consistency in strategic alignment builds influence and trust over time. If Pakistan cannot stand firmly with one side, it risks being sidelined by all.

Our future is directly linked to China. Beyond economics & defense, this is a partnership grounded in mutual respect & shared strategic interests. Their performance is not just commendable—it offers a lesson for bureaucracies around the world, particularly in neighboring countries like Pakistan.



While our senior officials & diplomats certainly carry experience & gravitas, we often fall short in grooming our young officers with similar strategic focus. There's much we can learn from China's approach to youth development within its political & diplomatic structures.

China is willing to do even more to support Pakistan's development & security, but our bureaucracy, our decision makers, & our establishment must prioritise this relationship. Public sentiment in Pakistan is already clear. Ask any ordinary citizen & they will affirm that China is Pakistan's only true friend. This is not an empty slogan, it is a reflection of lived experience.

Chinese nationals living & working in Pakistan often say they do not feel like they are in a foreign country. The warmth of people-to-people exchanges has been a vital part of building this trust. Pakistani hospitality, combined with China's commitment to our progress, has created a bond that is rare in today's fractured world. It is now the responsibility of those in power to safeguard & strengthen this bond, not jeopardize it for fleeting diplomatic shifts.



Pakistan's history of switching sides has too often undermined its strategic interests. This is the moment to break that pattern. We must stand our ground with China, not as a matter of convenience, but as a matter of principle, foresight, & national interest. The stakes are too high for missteps, and the opportunities too significant to squander.