

Forum:	Special, Political and Decolonization Committee (GA4)
Issue:	The Issue of Political Instability in Pakistan
Student Officer:	Elisavet Danai Bagiokou
Position:	Co-Chair

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Elisavet Danai Bagiokou and I am currently an 11th grade student at Doukas School. It is my honor to serve as one of the chairs in the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (GA4) of the 13th Platon School Model United Nations Conference.

I would like to begin by welcoming you all to this year's Platon School Model United Nations Conference and by congratulating you on deciding to get involved in the MUN "universe". MUN is a unique world, which gracefully provides all of its participants with many skills, which include public speaking, leadership and negotiation skills. It also promotes the acquisition of knowledge concerning issues that directly influence modern society. Nevertheless, the benefits of MUN extend beyond the academic sphere; it fosters enduring friendships that become long lasting bonds, making this experience holistic and undeniably extraordinary!

This year's agenda of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (GA4), includes three topics of utmost importance, "The issue of Political Instability in Pakistan" being one of them and the one of my expertise. The topic that this study guide addresses is a significant political issue, which has wide ranging effects. The study guide includes the topic's historical background, past attempts to resolve the issue, possible solutions and other information which is crucial in order to understand the issue and come up with solutions. Nevertheless, this study guide aims at contributing to your research and your general perception of the topic. Having said that, it is recommended to conduct your own personal research and to not solely rely on this study guide. Should you have any questions or need any help, please feel free to contact me at eliza.bagiokou17@gmail.com .

I am really looking forward to meeting you all!

Best regards,

Elisavet Danai Bagiokou

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan's creation can be traced back to the enactment of the Indian Independence Act in August 1947. This pivotal moment in Pakistan's formation marked the establishment of an autonomous nation, predominantly comprised of Muslim Pakistanis, notably shaping the largest Muslim-majority nation globally during that period. This occurrence stood as the most extensive instance of self-determination by a religious and ethnic group, involving around seventeen million individuals.

From its inception, Pakistan has grappled with a complex condition, mostly due to the cultural diversity among its inhabitants. The complexity deepens as Pakistan is home to a populace of several ethnic groups and a rich linguistic diversity. These factors heighten the difficulty of establishing a cohesive national identity, ultimately resulting in chronic regional tensions.

This phenomenon is part of an extended cycle that highlights the inherent and deeply historical political instability within Pakistan. Specifically, Pakistan has always experienced a disadvantage due to incumbency, as no Pakistani Prime Minister has managed to serve their entire tenure of five years in office. Fundamentally, opposition parties do not rely on elections for the removal of the incumbent party through votes, but instead they engage in agitation even while a civilian government is in control, pushing for their removal.

As a result, this dynamic has encouraged politicians and administrations to participate in exploitative or corrupt actions. This has led to many Pakistani citizens losing trust in the electoral system and the governmental institutions. These elements of political instability work collaboratively to undermine confidence in Pakistan's democracy.

The challenges that Pakistan has had to face include the actions of both civilian and military officials, regarding the pursuit of authoritative control. Additionally, there has been a debate regarding the type of governance Pakistan should embrace. More specifically, whether it should be Islamic or secular in nature. Nonetheless, irrespective of the governing structure - be it civilian or military, Islamic or secular – Pakistan has been faced with the difficulty of dealing with economic crises and natural disasters. For example, the 2005 Kashmir Earthquake, which resulted in a death toll exceeding 80,000, along with numerous injuries and displacements. The country has also experienced several floods, such as those in 2010, 2018, and the devastating floods of 2022, which submerged one third of the country.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Decentralization

The act or process of decentralizing an organization of government (moving control from a single place to several smaller ones).¹ There are several types of decentralization such as political, administrative and fiscal. ²

Constitution

The fundamental, underlying document which establishes the government of a nation or state.³

Separatism

The belief held by people of a particular race, religion, or other group within a country that they should be independent or have their own government.⁴

Territorial Integrity

According to international law, territorial integrity is the concept that grants sovereign states the right to defend their borders and all occupied territory inside them.⁵

Partition

To divide (a place, such as a country) into two or more territorial units having separate political status.⁶

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Creation of Pakistan

In March 1940, the All-India Muslim League, a political party in India, formally demanded for Pakistan to consist of provinces primarily comprised of Muslims in the northwest and northeast of India. This exploit was affiliated with the notion that the Indian Muslims should become their own nation, and not a minority in India. Thus, the Muslim League and its leader, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, strived to establish a

¹ "Decentralization." *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/decentralization?q=decentralization%2C>

² "Topics." *World Bank*, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic>

³ "Legal Dictionary - Law.Com." *Law.Com Legal Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.law.com/Default.aspx?selected=313>

⁴ "Separatism." *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/separatism?q=separatism>.

⁵ "Territorial Integrity and Political Independence." *Oxford Public International Law*, <https://opil.ouplaw.com/display/10.1093/law:epil/9780199231690/law-9780199231690-e1116>

⁶ "Definition of PARTITION." *Merriam-Webster.com*, 2019, www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/partition

constitutional framework that ensured a balance of authority between Hindus and Muslims.

Following such proceedings, the partition of India was initiated. At the time, the partition which took place indicated the division of two provinces of British India. The districts which primarily consisted of Muslims became a part of Pakistan and the ones primarily consisting of Hindus became India.

In August 1947, the 200-year rule of the Indian subcontinent by the British ended and the Indian Independence Act was passed, creating two new separate sovereign dominions; Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-majority India. Thus, Pakistan gained sovereignty on August 14th, 1947, forming the largest Muslim state in the world at the time. The creation of Pakistan resulted in the largest demographic movement in documented history, involving seventeen million individuals, encompassing Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs, who reportedly migrated in various directions between India and the two wings of Pakistan. Sixty million of the ninety-five million existing Muslims on the Indian subcontinent became citizens of Pakistan at the time of its creation.



Figure 1: Partition of India in August 1947⁷

Consequently, the citizens of the newly created country had an important similarity: they were Muslim. Thus, the Pakistani population was able to peacefully coexist with regards to their religion. However, there were other critical dissimilarities within the

⁷ "Partition 70 Years on: The Turmoil, Trauma - and Legacy." *BBC News*, BBC, 27 July 2017, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-40643413.

population. Upon Pakistan’s independence, its official language was English for several years, until efforts were made to promote the use of Urdu as the national and official language, as it was eventually declared in 1973. Nevertheless, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtu, Baluchi and Seraiki were very prevalent. Moreover, at the time of Pakistan’s creation, there were over 300 distinct dialects.

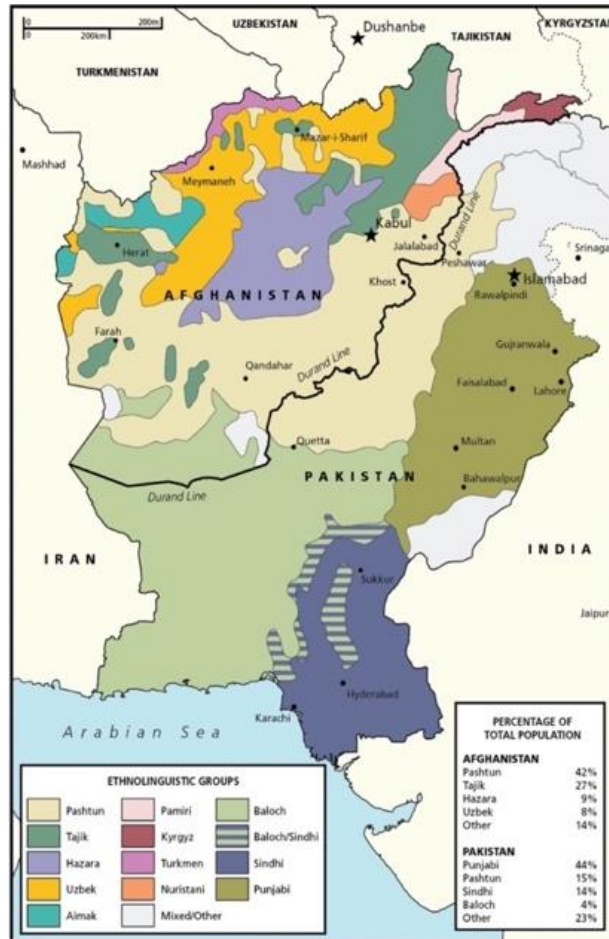


Figure 2: Pakistan's ethnic groups ⁸

Ever since the conception of Pakistan as an independent nation, it has been in an interesting predicament as far as national identity and the creation of a political system for its linguistically diverse population are concerned.

The cultural diversity in Pakistan lead to a lack of a unifying force, which, in turn, caused chronic regional tensions and repetitive failure when attempting to form a

⁸“Afghanistan and Pakistan Ethnic Groups.” *National Geographic*, 26 Jan. 2023, www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://images.nationalgeographic.org/image/upload/v1638888157/EducationHub/photos/afghanistan-and-pakistan-ethnic-groups.jpg&tbid=UPT0085AJCJTRM&vet=1&imgrefurl=https://www.nationalgeographic.org/maps/afghanistan-and-pakistan-ethnic-groups/&docid=ymq3rg0B0x6i2M&w=1033&h=1486&hl=en&source=sh/x/im/2.

constitution. This instability led to an unstable political system, which was characterized by corruption and a vulnerable central authority.

The partition affected both the military and the civil bureaucracy. Several cases of corruption were observed, along with a desire to secure the interests of the elite. This acted to ultimately impede the development of Pakistan into a democratic state. Controversies regarding the national language, the role of Islam and provincial representation delayed the draft of a constitution and postponed general elections. In October 1956, Pakistan achieved a significant milestone in its history with the declaration of its first constitution, a testament to the remarkable consensus-building efforts that preceded it. The process leading up to this moment began in 1949 when the Objectives Resolution was adopted, setting forth the foundational principles and vision for the future constitution. The Constituent Assembly, comprised of representatives from both East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan), was tasked with the responsibility of drafting and ratifying the constitution. To facilitate this task, various committees and subcommittees were established, addressing critical aspects such as fundamental rights, federalism, and the role of religion, with members hailing from diverse regions and political backgrounds. The constitution-making process was marked by intense negotiations and compromises, particularly concerning the delicate balance between East and West Pakistan, where East Pakistan's larger population often felt marginalized. Leaders of immense stature, including Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and Liaquat Ali Khan, played pivotal roles in guiding the process, ensuring that the constitution reflected the aspirations and interests of a nation on the cusp of a new era.

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

Separatism and extremism are two movements which have, over the years, constituted an obstacle for Pakistan's attainment of political stability. Among such movements, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is the most active and prominent one presently. TTP was established in 2007 as a movement to unite Islamist militant organizations which were operating individually and it is now based in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The organization's aim is to impose Sharia law, more specifically, Islamic religious law in Pakistan.

TTP has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks in Pakistan, including attacks on churches and schools. Thus, this organization has been considered threatening for both citizens and for properties in Pakistan. For this reason, in June 2014 the former Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, attempted to negotiate a peace agreement with the TTP, which led to attacks on an international airport, resulting in human casualties. The government then launched the Zarb-e-Azb Offensive, a military operation against military safe havens in a Taliban-dominated part of Pakistan's borders. The Pakistani forces managed to dismantle the TTP and disassemble its top leadership. However,

while the operation proved to be successful, several members of the TTP fled and regrouped.

Recent Developments

Vote of no-confidence and its ramifications

The last general elections in Pakistan were held on 25 July 2018. The three prevalent political parties were the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), the Pakistan Muslim League and the Pakistan People’s Party, but the PTI had the most votes and won the most seats in the National Assembly. Imran Khan, the leader of PTI, whose platform was based on reform of institutions and anti-corruption, was elected as Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Under Article 95 (4) of the constitution of Pakistan, if a resolution for a vote of no-confidence “is passed by a majority of the total membership of the National Assembly, the Prime Minister shall cease to hold office”.⁹ In other words, if 172 of the 342 members of the National Assembly vote in favor of a no-confidence motion, the current Prime Minister has to resign and a new prime minister is elected by the house.

In Pakistan, discussion on such a vote has been suspended/postponed in 1989 for Benazir Bhutto and in 2006 for Shaukat Aziz. On 11 February 2022, a vote of no confidence for Imran Khan was announced by the president of the Pakistan Democratic Movement, Fazaul-ur-Rehman. This vote was also supported by united opposition parties and even some members of PTI, Khan’s political party, who claimed that they would ally themselves with the opposite side. The reasons behind the vote of no confidence varied, including inflation, economic difficulties, poor governance and Khan’s changed relationship with the military. The military had supported Khan in 2018, but in 2022 said it is neutral about the vote, indicating a shift in the military’s position, even possibly a withdrawal of its support towards Imran Khan. On 8 March 2022, the united opposition parties officially filed the motion for a no-confidence vote against Khan in the National Assembly.

Under Article 58 (1) of the constitution of Pakistan: “The President shall dissolve the National Assembly if so advised by the Prime Minister”.¹⁰

⁹ The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1333523681_951.pdf

¹⁰ The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1333523681_951.pdf

On 3 April 2022, the National Assembly Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri decided to dismiss the motion for a no-confidence vote, alleging that a foreign conspiracy had influenced the assembly and, thus, the vote was unconstitutional. On the same day, Prime Minister Khan announced that Article 58 (1) of the Pakistani constitution was implemented. On 7 April 2022, the Supreme Court of Pakistan ruled such actions unconstitutional and, thus, ordered the National Assembly to reconvene and hold the no-confidence vote.

On 9 April 2022, the no-confidence motion was entertained and ended up being supported by 174 politicians, marking Imran Khan as the first Prime Minister in Pakistani history to have been overthrown by a no-confidence vote and, thus, creating an unprecedented political instability in Pakistan.

On 11 April 2022, Shehbaz Sharif was elected as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan.

[Alleged foreign interference](#)

Imran Khan claimed that foreign interference and more specifically, the USA's interference was connected with his ousting as Prime Minister. According to Khan, Donald Lu, assistant secretary of the US Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, met with a Pakistani ambassador and urged Khan's dismissal through the no-confidence vote, and if that did not occur, Donald Lu allegedly claimed that there would be consequences. The Biden Administration has denied such allegations. Khan also claimed that he possesses a cipher - an encoded diplomatic cable – which can be used as evidence and was presented to Pakistan's National Security Council (NSC). The NSC rejected such claims. Thus, the alleged foreign interference has not been supported by evidence.

Pakistan's former Prime Minister later reversed his claim and proclaimed his willingness to cooperate with the US if he ever got re-elected.

[Attack on Imran Khan's march](#)

After Imran Khan's loss at the no-confidence vote in parliament and his removal from office, many protests took place all across Pakistan. Thousands of Khan's supporters protested. In the context of such demonstrations, on November 3rd Imran Khan lead an anti-government protest convoy in Wazirabad, nearly 200km from Pakistan's capital, Islamabad. During that march, a man opened fire using a gun, shooting and wounding Khan in his lower leg. Even though his life was not endangered by the gunfire, his supporters called this incident an 'assassination attempt'. One of Khan's supporters sustained deadly bullet wounds and 14 people were injured.

Imran Khan's arrests

On 9 May 2023 Imran Khan was arrested by paramilitary troops inside a courthouse in Islamabad. He was placed under arrest on charges of corruption brought by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Despite his arrest, Khan denied such allegations. On the day of his arrest, there were various nationwide protests, including in Islamabad, Peshawar and Lahore. Protesters began to act unpredictably, throwing stones at police and chanting against the government and the army. The uncontrolled protesters invaded military properties and occasionally set them on fire. The army, then, issued a statement: "Any further attack on the army, including all law enforcement agencies, military and state installations and properties, will be severely retaliated against, the full responsibility of which will be on the very group that wants to push Pakistan into civil war."¹¹ More than 300 people were injured and the government disrupted access to mobile internet services. Hence, the already unstable political landscape of Pakistan deteriorated, fueling the differences between the military and Khan's supporters.

On 11 May 2023, Pakistan's Supreme Court ruled that the arrest was unlawful and ordered the authorities to immediately release Imran Khan. Pakistan's government condemned such decision and openly stated that his re-arrest was imminent. After Khan's release, various members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party were arrested. There was also involvement of the military court, which stemmed from charges due to the alleged attack on military installations and monuments.

On 5 August 2023, Imran Khan was arrested again, after he was convicted of unlawfully buying and selling gifts in state possession. The allegation supported that the gifts included watches, one of them valued at \$300,000. Khan's conviction also banned him from running for political office for a period of five years. Similarly, to former Prime Minister Khan's first arrest in May, he once again denied any wrongdoing, while also claiming that such charges were politically motivated. Information Minister Maryam Aurangzeb stated that Imran Khan has been "proven guilty of illegal practices, corruption, concealing assets and wrongly declaring wealth in tax returns"¹². Since the no-confidence vote, there have been more than 150 legal cases against Imran Khan which include charges on corruption and terrorism. Some of the charges have also

¹¹ "Protesters Are Turning on Pakistan's Military after Imran Khan's Arrest. Here's What You Need to Know." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 11 May 2023, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/05/11/asia/imran-khan-pakistan-political-explainer-intl-hnk/index.html>

¹² "Why Was Pakistan's Former Prime Minister Imran Khan Arrested?" *Imran Khan News | Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/5/why-was-pakistans-former-prime-minister-imran-khan-arrested

referred to the violent outbreaks in May 2023, which included deadly protests and attacks on military property. Former Prime Minister Imran Khan is serving a three-year jail sentence.

Impending elections

As previously mentioned, under Article 58 (1) of the constitution of Pakistan: “The President shall dissolve the National Assembly if so advised by the Prime Minister”.¹³ As such, on 9 August 2023, Shehbaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan at the time, advised President Arif Alvi to dissolve the National Assembly, the lower house of parliament. The parliament’s official five-year term would end on August 12, but Sharif advised the President to dissolve it three days in advance. Following such proceeding, under Article 224(2) of the Constitution of Pakistan: “When the National Assembly or a Provincial Assembly is dissolved, a general election to the Assembly shall be held within a period of ninety days after the dissolution”¹³ and “The caretaker Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition in the outgoing National Assembly”¹³. Hence, according to the Constitution of Pakistan, prior to the occurrence of the elections, an interim administration should assume responsibility for a duration up to 90 days.

On August 16, 2023, a caretaker cabinet was sworn in, including the interim Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. This interim administration is anticipated to retain authority for an extended duration, since the Pakistan Election Commission has declared its intention to establish new boundaries for a substantial number of constituencies, thereby increasing the likelihood of a delay in the impending elections.

The role of the Pakistani Military

Since the creation of Pakistan, the role of the Pakistani Military in the country’s political life has mainly consisted of exerting influence on political decisions and engaging in hybrid regimes, while also positioning itself as a pillar of discipline and nationalism. This interference challenges the foundational principle of civilian authority, diminishing the supremacy of elected representatives in the political landscape. Such interventions pose a threat to the democratic processes that are fundamental to a healthy governance system, raising concerns about the potential for authoritarian rule. The 200-yearlong British rule of the Indian subcontinent has undeniably affected the structure of the Pakistani military up to the present day. Even after Pakistan had gained independence, British generals still possessed the authority

¹³ *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan*, na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1333523681_951.pdf

of the Pakistani military until 1951, when the leadership was, then, given to General Ayub Khan. In 1958, he became the second president of Pakistan through the first military coup, tying the military to politics. This coup guaranteed the centralization of the military's power over the following years, without the need to establish a governing coalition.

Though civil authority was established in 1971, the country experienced two more periods of military rule, in 1977-1988 and in 1999-2008. Even during periods of civil authority, the military constituted the de facto power broker, influencing alliances and governments. Though the end of the last military rule in 2008 marked the return to democracy, it is believed that the military remained a major part of Pakistan's politics. The Army has rejected allegations of political involvement, yet it is a popular opinion that it contributed to Imran Khan's success in the last general elections in 2018 by assembling allies to support his coalition government.

Despite the good relations that Imran Khan maintained with the military, a strain was put in this relationship in 2021. Inter-Service Intelligence, the most prime intelligence agency in Pakistan, lacked a chief and Imran Khan tried to impose his will by appointing his own choice as the new chief. The military disapproved of his actions, resisted this initiative and Khan relented. However, there was an escalation of the pressure between the two sides after the no-confidence vote, since Khan believed that the military was involved. Imran Khan publicly expressed his criticism about the military's influential political role as well as his view that it should be limited by ensuring a democratic political life in Pakistan.

Challenges in Pakistan

Numerous historical events have left a lasting impact on Pakistan, leading to significant shifts in its political and social stability. The devastating floods in 2022, for instance, have had severe repercussions on the livelihood of a substantial portion of the population. The country's economy is currently grappling to regain stability, with inflation reaching alarming levels. Amidst these challenges, Pakistan's society finds itself deeply politically polarized, with Imran Khan playing a pivotal role in this polarization of the political landscape. Political polarization, characterized by its divisive nature, weakens the sense of unity within a society. Over time, the impact of political polarization extends beyond the political sphere, shaping societal perspectives, and posing challenges to the fundamental principles of a robust democracy. These struggles have resulted in a strained relationship between the government and the military, creating unprecedented tensions.

The current coalition government is confronted with a range of challenges. It is of utmost importance that the political tensions be eased through extending cooperation to the opposition. The interim government also holds the responsibility

of addressing the threat posed by militant groups, which present a challenge to the country's overall stability, particularly in its political landscape. Nonetheless, the ultimate challenge will be to effectively address these concerns, considering that the government consists of parties with highly divergent ideologies.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America (USA)

The United States established diplomatic relations with Pakistan one year after the country's independence in 1947. The relationship between the United States of America and Pakistan has often been turbulent, however, for several years it has been mutually benefactor. The United States have provided military aid to Pakistan with regards to dealing with terrorism and extremism, which are some of the main causes for Pakistan's political instability. However, in 2017, the Trump administration suspended security assistance to Pakistan, on the basis of Pakistan's alleged unwillingness to remove militants who seek sanctuary in Pakistani territory but constitute a threat towards US civilians. The United States does not allow access for Pakistani military officers to US military training and education programs in an effort to express its displeasure as far as Pakistan's policy is concerned. However, the Biden Administration's 2022 budget request for assistance to Pakistan totaled \$89 million. Without the support of the US, separatist movements and other armed groups could regain power, which would present a challenge to the Pakistani government, since that would be a cause for its destabilization. Moreover, after Imran Khan was removed from office due to the no-confidence vote in the parliament, he claimed that USA's involvement was critical to the result of the vote, since allegations towards USA's officials were made. Khan later reversed his claim, however, such allegations put a strain on the relationship between the two countries, which lead to a lack of trust.

China

Upon the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Pakistan swiftly emerged as one of the first countries to recognize it. Subsequently, in 1951, diplomatic ties were formalized between the two nations. China and Pakistan have nurtured robust connections that hinge, among other factors, on strategic cooperation and mutual support in numerous fields. More specifically, these ties are often referred to as an "all-weather" relationship, since the two countries share historical, cultural, geopolitical, economic and military bonds. China and Pakistan share an interest in countering terrorism and extremism, and, thus, they cooperate in order to address common security challenges. Moreover, they often work together in regional organizations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), whose aim is to ensure the effective cooperation of the Member States in areas including politics,

energy and trade. The two countries work together in such a platform to promote regional security and stability. Lastly, Pakistan and China offer mutual assistance regarding their fundamental interests. This encompasses China's endorsement of Pakistan's position on the Kashmir matter, alongside Pakistan's acknowledgment of China's territorial integrity and its approaches concerning Tibet and Taiwan.

India

The Indo-Pakistani conflict originated from the division of British India in 1947. The India Independence Act granted the regions of Jammu and Kashmir the option to decide their preferred country for accession. India assumed responsibility for Kashmir's defense, leading to the initiation of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947-48. Differing territorial claims have resulted in four conflicts between Pakistan and India, with three of these arising due to the issue of Kashmir. During the beginning of 2021, the military forces of Pakistan and India released a Joint Statement in which they reiterated their shared dedication to the ceasefire arrangement along the Line of Control in Kashmir, initially established in 2003. During the May 2023 summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization held in India, the foreign ministers of both India and Pakistan did not utilize the occasion for enhancing bilateral relations, particularly concerning the matter of Kashmir. Moreover, the Pakistani military's actions directed towards Imran Khan in early 2023 have sparked worries that the political unrest in Pakistan could impede progress towards peace. Irrespective of any lingering tensions, on August 1st, 2023, former Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his willingness to reinstate bilateral discussions with India.

Pakistan

Pakistan has grappled with political instability throughout its history. A complex combination of factors, including military interventions, undeveloped democratic institutions, ethnic and religious diversity, and socio-economic challenges, has contributed to such instability. Periodic shifts and limited durations in leadership, often marked by military coups, have hindered the development of stable and democratic governance. Civilian governments and the military have engaged in power struggles, which have occasionally lead to policy inconsistencies. Additionally, economic disparities, regional tensions, and extremist elements further complicate the country's political landscape. Efforts to establish a durable democratic framework continue, but their progress has been impeded by Pakistan's recent political developments. Pakistan requires a restoration of its electoral processes, a recalibration of the relationship between civilian administrations and the military, along with leaders who advocate for an equitable and harmonious way of life.

Afghanistan

Pakistan and Afghanistan established diplomatic relations on August 22, 1947, shortly after Pakistan gained independence. Nevertheless, the bilateral relationship between

the two nations has often been marred by disputes. The Durand Line issue, a longstanding border dispute, has intricately affected diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is due to its division of the Pashtun ethnic region between the two countries. Yet, another incendiary topic revolves around the alleged Pakistani military assistance to the Taliban, a claim that the Pakistani government has persistently rejected. Efforts to improve relations have been made through various initiatives, including the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS), which covers areas such as counterterrorism and connectivity.

Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)

The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) was established in 1984 with the goal of retaining peaceful dialogue and addressing issues of human rights and their protection in Asia. AHRC recognizes that the act of informing the public about major social and political issues and raising awareness about human rights is crucial in order to ensure public representation and a safe democratic environment for every citizen. Nonetheless, AHRC'S distinctive principle and action is that except for the theoretical aspect of creating public awareness, it also focuses on addressing practical problems in the implementation of human rights. AHRC's core function consists of regional, sub-regional and country-based consultations and programs, revolving around the overall concept of introducing an Asian Charter for Human Rights. The consultations which concern collaboration with local human rights activists and organisations are fundamental, since they allow the AHRC to extensively examine and subsequently pinpoint the exact needs and requirements of each individual region. Thus, the AHRC is committed to ensuring that the institutions can guarantee human rights protection and democracy through the creation of advocacy groups and the provision of assistance to them, with the ultimate goal of articulating demands for change and development. Lastly, the AHRC frequently organizes thematic discussions, invites experts and holds presentations which result in knowledge production.

Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) was established in 1986. As a non-political, not-for-profit organization, HRCP is committed to ensuring the protection of all human rights—civil, political, economic, social, and cultural—for all Pakistani citizens and people in the country. HRCP is affiliated with actions which pertain to the protection of political rights, such as the promotion of democratic governance by strenuously supporting and demanding constitutional and legal reforms, participatory democracy and fair electoral processes. HRCP also monitors legal and political developments and provides counsel, such that it has occasionally gained special consultative status with the United Nations, such as the position of UN Special Rapporteur. This organization also lobbies with lawmakers and state institutions in an effort to introduce measures which promote the utter respect for human rights.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
1858-1947	The duration of British Raj; the period of British rule on the Indian subcontinent
1947	The Indian Independence Act is passed, creating two new independent dominions; Pakistan and India.
14 August 1947	Pakistan gains independence and was declared a sovereign state.
1989	A no-confidence vote against Benzamin Bhutto is tabled.
2006	A no-confidence vote against Shaukat Aziz is tabled.
July 25, 2018	The last general elections are held in Pakistan, in which Imran Khan was elected as the Prime Minister.
February 11, 2022	The president of the Pakistan Democratic Movement, Fazaul-ur-Rehman announces that a no-confidence vote against Iran Khan is imminent.
March 8, 2022	The united opposition parties officially file the motion for a no-confidence vote against Khan in the National Assembly.
April 9, 2022	Imran Khan is released of his duties after the no-confidence vote was supported by the majority of the National Assembly.
April 11, 2022	Shehbaz Sharif is elected as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan.
May 9, 2023	Imran Khan is arrested on charges of corruption.
May 2023	The supporters of Imran Khan engage in protests, resulting in unprecedented damage to the military's properties.
August 5, 2023	Imran Khan is arrested for the second time, due to charges regarding illegally selling state gifts.
August 9, 2023	President Ariv Alfi dissolves parliament upon advisement from the current Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif.
August 16, 2023	The interim, caretaker government is sworn in.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

“Delivering as one” approach **Σφάλμα! Δεν έχει οριστεί σελιδοδείκτης.**¹⁴

The ‘Delivering as One’ pilot program was proposed as a means of enhancing the United Nations' capacity to address the 21st-century challenges effectively, while also being an extension to the ongoing reform agenda set by UN member states. In 2006, Pakistan became a ‘Delivering as One’ pilot country. Collaboration among UN partners has been instrumental in aligning their efforts with Pakistan's national priorities, enhancing efficiency across various levels, including the country, regional, and global contexts. In addition to addressing critical areas such as healthcare, food security, education, and social protection, the 'Delivering as One' approach plays a crucial role in assisting Pakistan in dealing with issues pertaining to governance and promoting economic growth. The goal by 2022 was for the Pakistani people to have “improved access to more accountable, transparent and effective governance mechanisms and Rule of Law Institutions.”¹⁴

Antonio Gueterres’ May 10th 2023 statement¹⁵

On May 10th, 2023, the United Nations Secretary-General issued a statement in response to the protests that had arisen as a result of Imran Khan's arrest. He called “for all parties to refrain from violence” and urged the authorities to maintain their commitment to due process and the rule of law. Antonio Gueterres also stressed “the need to respect the right to peaceful assembly.”

Charter of Democracy (CoD)¹⁶

The Charter of Democracy (CoD), signed in 2006 between Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), was a pivotal agreement aimed at revitalizing democratic principles and strengthening democratic institutions in Pakistan. This historic accord, spearheaded by Benazir Bhutto of PPP and Nawaz Sharif of PML-N, outlined several key objectives. It prioritized the restoration of democracy in a country that had seen periods of military rule and political instability, advocating for the repeal of anti-democratic laws and amendments introduced during military regimes. The CoD also stressed the importance of an independent judiciary, parliamentary supremacy, electoral reforms, protection of fundamental rights, accountability of public officials, provincial autonomy, national reconciliation, and constitutional amendments. While it marked a significant stride towards promoting democracy in Pakistan and fostering cooperation between major political parties, the

¹⁴ “The United Nations in Pakistan in Pakistan.” *United Nations*, <https://pakistan.un.org/en/about/about-the-un>

¹⁵ “United Nations in Pakistan.” *United Nations*, pakistan.un.org/en

¹⁶ “B. Code of Conduct.” *Pakistan Peoples Party*, web.archive.org/web/20090519022229/www.ppp.org.pk/elections/cod.html

full implementation of its provisions faced challenges and remained a subject of debate in Pakistan's political landscape.

Devolution of Powers: The 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan of 2010¹⁷

The 18th Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan, enacted in 2010, stands as a significant milestone in the country's political history. This constitutional amendment brought about substantial changes aimed at addressing longstanding concerns related to provincial autonomy and political representation. One of its most notable provisions was the empowerment of provincial governments with greater autonomy in critical policy areas like education, health, and agriculture, allowing them to cater to the unique needs and priorities of their regions. Concurrently, it removed certain powers from the federal government, reinforcing the authority of provincial administrations. Additionally, the amendment sought to rectify imbalances by enhancing provincial representation in federal legislative bodies, promoting a more equitable distribution of power and resources among the provinces. Overall, the 18th Amendment marked a positive step forward in strengthening democracy and federalism in Pakistan, although it sparked ongoing debates about the balance of power and the effective implementation of these new provisions. It was part of a broader effort to reform and enhance Pakistan's governance and democratic institutions, highlighting the country's commitment to fostering greater political inclusivity.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Anti-corruption policies

It is essential to institute robust mechanisms aimed at holding politicians and government officials accountable for instances of corruption and the misuse of power. This accountability serves as a foundational step towards restoring public trust and confidence in the political system. Simultaneously, there is a critical need to enhance the efficacy of anti-corruption institutions. Strengthening these institutions is pivotal for combating corruption at all levels of government and ensuring that they have the necessary tools and authority to carry out their mandates effectively. Such measures not only contribute to promoting transparency and good governance but also play a vital role in curbing the factors that contribute to political instability.

¹⁷ *Constitution (Eighteenth Amendment) Act, 2010*,
<http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/amendments/18amendment.html>

Creating a balance of power for the strengthening of democracy

It is of utmost importance that state institutions diligently adhere to their prescribed constitutional roles while fostering a delicate balance of power. In democratic governance, state institutions encompass the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, each wielding distinct responsibilities outlined in the constitution. By faithfully executing these roles, these institutions ensure accountability, transparency, and the protection of individual rights. However, the true essence of democracy is unveiled when these institutions collaborate within the framework of checks and balances, preventing any single entity from amassing excessive authority. This equilibrium of power safeguards against authoritarianism, upholds the principles of representation, and guarantees responsiveness to diverse citizenry.

Reviving the parliament

Reviving the parliament requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes transparency, accountability, and collaboration. To achieve this, it is essential to strengthen oversight mechanisms by advocating for the utilization of powerful committees capable of effectively scrutinizing the executive branch. Furthermore, public engagement should be actively encouraged to ensure that the parliament remains responsive to the needs and concerns of the citizens it represents. Implementing a comprehensive code of conduct and promoting bipartisanship will foster a healthier political culture, enabling cross-party collaboration on critical national issues. Lastly, mechanisms for resolving disputes and conflicts within the parliament must be established to facilitate productive legislative processes.

Facilitating political discourse for the purpose of resolving conflicts

Past political developments in Pakistan have showcased significant differences among political parties. Consequently, there is an imperative need for these parties to identify common ground and establish consensus on crucial issues to effectively address the country's challenges, since these divergences do not contribute to stability. Additionally, numerous disagreements between the military and the government of Pakistan have posed significant challenges to the establishment and maintenance of fair governance in the country. These differences have often resulted in power struggles and interventions that disrupt the democratic process. Consequently, there is a pressing need to mend the relationship between these two pillars of the state. Achieving a more balanced relationship between the military and the civilian government is essential for fostering political stability, upholding democratic values and ensuring that governance in Pakistan is characterized by transparency, accountability, and respect for the rule of law.

Electoral Reforms

In anticipation of upcoming elections, a pressing imperative is to safeguard against the transformation of political competition into violent conflict by underscoring the

urgency of electoral reforms as a paramount agenda item. These reforms can bolster the integrity of the electoral process and curb electoral fraud through the implementation of stringent measures and the exploration of alternative voting systems to foster a more diverse and inclusive political representation. An essential component of this reform initiative is the promotion of autonomy and professionalism within the election commission. By enhancing transparency and credibility in the voting process, these reforms reduce the likelihood of a deteriorating security environment that might necessitate the military's intervention in the political arena.

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