

Q. No. 2

Propose prospective foreign policy options for Pakistan in the wake of Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022.

1. Introduction

- Russia-Ukraine war transformed global geopolitics, revived bloc politics and disrupted energy, food and financial markets.
- Pakistan needs a **balanced, interest-driven and economically oriented foreign policy** rather than alignment with any great-power bloc.

2. The Ukraine War has altered Pakistan's strategic and economic environment

- 2.1 Intensifying US-China-Russia rivalry has narrowed Pakistan's diplomatic space.
- 2.2 The war has disrupted global energy, food, fertilizer and commodity markets.
- 2.3 Pakistan faces pressure to reconcile its relations with the US, China, Russia and European powers.
- 2.4 The conflict has reinforced the importance of strategic autonomy for middle powers.
- 2.5 Pakistan's economic vulnerabilities make access to affordable energy and international markets a foreign-policy priority.

3. Pakistan should pursue strategic neutrality without compromising international law

- 3.1 Maintain principled opposition to aggression and support the UN Charter.
- 3.2 Avoid becoming part of either the Western or Russia-China strategic bloc.
- 3.3 Continue dialogue with Moscow while preserving constructive relations with Washington and Europe.
- 3.4 Use multilateral forums such as the UN, SCO and OIC to promote diplomacy and conflict resolution.

4. Economic diplomacy should become the central pillar of Pakistan's post-Ukraine foreign policy

- 4.1 Explore mutually beneficial energy cooperation with Russia within international legal and financial constraints.
- 4.2 Expand trade and investment relations with Central Asia through regional connectivity.
- 4.3 Protect food and fertilizer supplies against future global disruptions.
- 4.4 Strengthen economic relations with the EU, Gulf states, China and other major markets simultaneously.
- 4.5 Use CPEC and Gwadar to position Pakistan as a regional connectivity hub.

5. Pakistan should convert geopolitical competition into diplomatic opportunities

- 5.1 Use its relations with China, Russia, the US, Gulf states and Central Asian countries to maintain diplomatic flexibility.
- 5.2 Promote Pakistan as a facilitator of dialogue rather than a participant in bloc confrontation.
- 5.3 Strengthen relations with Turkey, Iran, Central Asia and the Muslim world.
- 5.4 Pursue issue-based partnerships instead of permanent strategic alignment.

6. Conclusion

Pakistan's optimal response is **strategic autonomy, balanced relations, economic diplomacy and principled multilateralism.**

Q. No. 3

The 2021 Taliban Takeover of Afghanistan presents regional and global challenges. Elaborate the anticipated policies of the Taliban government and the regional and global response.

1. Introduction

- Taliban takeover on **15 August 2021** fundamentally changed Afghanistan's political and security landscape.
- The development has consequences for Pakistan, Central Asia, Iran, China, Russia, the West and the wider international system.

2. The Taliban government is likely to pursue a pragmatic but ideologically conservative policy

- 2.1 Seek international recognition while retaining the Taliban's Islamic political identity.
- 2.2 Attempt to establish internal security and consolidate control over the country.
- 2.3 Seek economic assistance and investment to address Afghanistan's severe economic crisis.
- 2.4 Assure neighbouring states that Afghan territory will not be used against them.
- 2.5 Maintain restrictions on political opposition and dissent.
- 2.6 Women's education, employment and political participation remain major points of international concern.

3. Taliban rule creates serious regional security challenges

- 3.1 The presence of terrorist groups such as ISIS-K creates a persistent regional threat.
- 3.2 TTP activity has created direct security challenges for Pakistan.
- 3.3 Refugee flows place additional economic and social pressure on neighbouring countries.

- 3.4 Drug trafficking, arms proliferation and border insecurity can increase regional instability.
3.5 Afghanistan's instability threatens regional connectivity and trade projects.

4. Regional powers have adopted cautious engagement rather than unconditional recognition

- 4.1 Pakistan advocates engagement and an inclusive, stable Afghan government.
4.2 China seeks security guarantees and economic opportunities, particularly regarding Xinjiang and regional connectivity.
4.3 Iran maintains pragmatic engagement while remaining concerned about refugees, water and sectarian/security issues.
4.4 Russia has engaged the Taliban while remaining concerned about terrorism and Central Asian security.
4.5 Central Asian states prioritise border security and preventing militant spillover.

5. The global response remains centred on conditional engagement

- 5.1 Western states have avoided full recognition while maintaining humanitarian engagement.
5.2 The international community demands protection of human rights, particularly women's and girls' rights.
5.3 Humanitarian assistance remains necessary to prevent economic collapse.
5.4 The UN continues to provide a major platform for humanitarian and diplomatic engagement.
5.5 The central dilemma remains whether engagement can influence Taliban behaviour without granting unconditional legitimacy.

6. Conclusion

A stable Afghanistan requires **pragmatic engagement, counterterrorism cooperation, humanitarian assistance and an inclusive political framework**, rather than isolation alone.

Q. No. 4

How do the nature and possible prospects of US-Russia strategic nuclear deterrence change with the enforcement of New START treaty of 2021? What could be the treaty's implications on Pakistan's nuclear programme, keeping in view its defence policy?

1. Introduction

- **New START**, signed in 2010 and entering into force in 2011, remained the principal legally binding limitation on US and Russian strategic nuclear arsenals.

- Its extension in **2021** preserved strategic predictability at a time of increasing US-Russia rivalry.

2. New START maintains the basic structure of strategic nuclear deterrence

2.1 It limits each side to **1,550 deployed strategic nuclear warheads**.

2.2 It limits deployed strategic delivery systems to **700** and deployed/non-deployed launchers to **800**.

2.3 Verification and data-exchange mechanisms increase transparency.

2.4 Mutual assured destruction therefore remains intact despite numerical limitations.

2.5 The treaty reduces incentives for an unconstrained strategic arms race.

3. The treaty provides stability but cannot eliminate the emerging nuclear rivalry

3.1 US-Russia relations have deteriorated sharply since the Ukraine War.

3.2 New technologies such as hypersonic weapons, cyber capabilities and missile defence complicate traditional deterrence.

3.3 Tactical/non-strategic nuclear weapons remain outside New START's central limits.

3.4 The future of arms control is therefore increasingly uncertain.

3.5 Strategic competition is gradually moving beyond traditional warhead-and-launcher calculations.

4. New START has limited direct implications for Pakistan's nuclear programme

4.1 Pakistan is not a party to New START and is therefore not legally bound by its numerical restrictions.

4.2 Pakistan's nuclear posture is primarily shaped by its security environment in South Asia, particularly India's conventional and nuclear capabilities.

4.3 Pakistan's policy of **Credible Minimum Deterrence** remains India-centric rather than US-Russia-centric.

4.4 US-Russia arms-control developments nevertheless influence the broader global nuclear environment.

5. Pakistan should preserve strategic stability while avoiding an unnecessary arms race

5.1 Maintain credible deterrence against India while retaining restraint in force development.

5.2 Strengthen command, control and nuclear security mechanisms.

5.3 Support non-discriminatory global arms-control initiatives.

5.4 Pursue regional risk-reduction and confidence-building measures with India.

5.5 Seek recognition of Pakistan's security concerns in international non-proliferation diplomacy.

6. Conclusion

New START historically provided **strategic predictability between the two largest nuclear powers**, but its limitations demonstrate the need for a broader and more inclusive arms-control architecture.

Q. No. 5

Muslim Ummah has failed to unite under one roof. Discuss ways and means to unite the Muslim Ummah with a pragmatic approach.

1. Introduction

- The Muslim world possesses substantial demographic, economic, geographical and energy resources but remains politically fragmented.
- Unity therefore requires **pragmatic cooperation rather than complete political uniformity**.

2. Political fragmentation and competing national interests remain the principal barriers to Muslim unity

- 2.1 Rivalries among major Muslim states prevent collective strategic action.
- 2.2 Sunni-Shia sectarian tensions undermine intra-Muslim cooperation.
- 2.3 Civil wars and political instability weaken collective institutions.
- 2.4 External geopolitical competition frequently deepens internal divisions.
- 2.5 Weak economic integration prevents Muslim states from translating resources into collective influence.

3. OIC should be transformed from a consultative forum into an effective platform for cooperation

- 3.1 Develop mechanisms for resolving disputes among member states.
- 3.2 Establish stronger economic and diplomatic coordination.
- 3.3 Develop collective positions on Palestine, Islamophobia and humanitarian crises.
- 3.4 Strengthen OIC-linked institutions for trade, investment, science and technology.
- 3.5 Introduce practical mechanisms for implementing summit-level decisions.

4. Economic and technological integration can provide the most sustainable basis for unity

- 4.1 Expand intra-OIC trade and investment.
- 4.2 Develop joint infrastructure, energy and connectivity projects.
- 4.3 Establish stronger cooperation in science, technology and higher education.

- 4.4 Create mechanisms for food and energy security.
- 4.5 Encourage joint ventures rather than dependence on external powers.

5. Muslim unity must be built around shared interests while respecting national sovereignty

- 5.1 Replace sectarian politics with a shared Islamic identity and common interests.
- 5.2 Promote dialogue between Saudi Arabia, Iran, Türkiye, Pakistan and other influential states.
- 5.3 Use mediation instead of confrontation in intra-Muslim disputes.
- 5.4 Encourage people-to-people, academic and cultural exchanges.
- 5.5 Make Palestine, humanitarian protection and development areas of practical collective action.

6. Conclusion

The Muslim Ummah does not require a single political roof; it requires **common institutions, economic interdependence, conflict-resolution mechanisms and collective strategic interests.**

Q. No. 6

Numerous political systems have been in vogue in Pakistan with limited success. Draft your own proposed but practical system that would result in good governance. Stipulate reasons and conditions for its success.

1. Introduction

Pakistan's experience with parliamentary and presidential systems demonstrates that **institutional weakness, political instability and poor accountability—not merely the constitutional form of government—have hindered good governance.**

2. Pakistan should retain parliamentary democracy while introducing stronger governance institutions

- 2.1 The Prime Minister should remain the chief executive responsible to Parliament.
- 2.2 The President should continue as a constitutional head of state.
- 2.3 Parliament should exercise genuine legislative and oversight functions.
- 2.4 Federalism should remain intact with effective provincial autonomy.
- 2.5 Local governments should become a constitutionally protected third tier.

3. A strengthened parliamentary model should combine political accountability with administrative continuity

- 3.1 Fixed parliamentary procedures should discourage arbitrary dissolution and political engineering.
- 3.2 A limited constructive vote of no-confidence can prevent governments from being removed without an alternative majority.
- 3.3 Civil servants should receive security of tenure based on merit and performance.
- 3.4 Independent regulatory and accountability institutions should operate without political interference.
- 3.5 Parliamentary committees should exercise meaningful oversight over ministries and public expenditure.

4. Decentralisation and merit-based administration should become the foundations of good governance

- 4.1 Local governments should control meaningful administrative and financial resources.
- 4.2 Public appointments should follow transparent merit-based procedures.
- 4.3 Digital governance should reduce discretion, corruption and bureaucratic delays.
- 4.4 Performance-based budgeting should link public spending with measurable outcomes.
- 4.5 Police and justice-sector reforms should improve citizens' access to the state.

5. The proposed system can succeed only when political and institutional conditions are protected

- 5.1 Civilian supremacy and constitutional continuity must be respected.
- 5.2 The judiciary must remain independent and constitutionally empowered.
- 5.3 Election institutions must enjoy operational and financial autonomy.
- 5.4 Political parties must strengthen internal democracy and policy-based politics.
- 5.5 Media and civil society should be allowed to perform their accountability functions.

6. Conclusion

Pakistan does not necessarily require another constitutional experiment; it requires a **strengthened parliamentary system based on decentralisation, institutional continuity, accountability and civilian constitutional supremacy.**

Q. No. 7

US-China trade war may be the Second Cold War. Critically evaluate the future world order with China, Russia and the US as main actors.

1. Introduction

The US-China rivalry has expanded beyond tariffs into **technology, semiconductors, supply chains, military power and competing geopolitical influence**, while Russia's confrontation with the West has added another dimension to the emerging order.

2. US-China rivalry is producing a form of strategic competition that resembles but does not replicate the Cold War

- 2.1 The US seeks to preserve its technological and strategic primacy.
- 2.2 China seeks greater influence and a larger role in global governance.
- 2.3 Competition increasingly centres on semiconductors, AI, critical minerals and supply chains.
- 2.4 Unlike the original Cold War, the US and China remain deeply economically interconnected.
- 2.5 Most developing states are reluctant to choose permanent alignment with either power.

3. Russia remains a major military and geopolitical actor despite its economic limitations

- 3.1 Russia retains one of the world's largest nuclear arsenals.
- 3.2 The Ukraine War has strengthened Russia's strategic dependence on China.
- 3.3 Russia is expanding relations with non-Western states through the BRICS and other platforms.
- 3.4 Energy resources remain an important instrument of Russian influence.
- 3.5 Russia's future global role will depend on its economic resilience and ability to sustain strategic partnerships.

4. The emerging world order is likely to become multipolar rather than purely bipolar

- 4.1 China and the US will remain the two principal economic and technological powers.
- 4.2 Russia will retain disproportionate influence through nuclear capability, military power and energy.
- 4.3 India, the EU, Türkiye and Gulf states will increasingly exercise independent strategic influence.
- 4.4 BRICS expansion reflects growing demand for alternatives to Western-dominated institutions.
- 4.5 Global institutions will face increasing pressure to reflect the distribution of power in the twenty-first century.

5. The future will be shaped by managed competition rather than an absolute division into two blocs

- 5.1 Economic interdependence will discourage a complete return to Cold War-style isolation.
- 5.2 Strategic competition will continue in technology, trade, space and security.
- 5.3 Climate change, pandemics, terrorism and nuclear risks will require cooperation among rivals.
- 5.4 Middle powers will pursue flexible, issue-based alignments.

5.5 The central challenge will be preventing strategic competition from becoming direct military confrontation.

6. Conclusion

The emerging order is best understood as **competitive multipolarity**, in which US primacy is challenged by China, Russia retains strategic weight, and middle powers acquire greater diplomatic space.

Q. No. 8 — Short Notes

(a) Poverty & Trade in South Asia and the Role of SAARC

1. Introduction

South Asia combines high population density, significant poverty and enormous potential for regional trade, yet remains one of the world's least economically integrated regions.

2. Trade can reduce poverty through regional economic integration

2.1 Greater intra-regional trade creates employment and market opportunities.

2.2 Regional supply chains can reduce production and transportation costs.

2.3 Cross-border trade can benefit SMEs, agriculture and services.

2.4 Energy and transport connectivity can support poorer landlocked states.

3. SAARC's potential remains constrained by political divisions

3.1 Pakistan-India tensions have severely restricted regional economic cooperation.

3.2 Non-tariff barriers and protectionism restrict intra-regional trade.

3.3 Weak transport and energy connectivity increases transaction costs.

3.4 SAARC institutions have struggled to translate agreements into implementation.

4. Way forward

- Revive SAARC dialogue.
- Reduce tariffs and non-tariff barriers.
- Improve regional transport and energy connectivity.
- Promote digital and financial integration.
- Separate economic cooperation from political disputes wherever possible.

5. Conclusion

Greater regional trade can become an important instrument of poverty reduction, but **South Asian integration requires political trust alongside economic reforms.**

(b) Xi Jinping vs Joe Biden: A Comparison of Leadership Qualities

1. Leadership models

Xi Jinping: Centralised, long-term and party-centric leadership focused on national rejuvenation and strategic continuity.

Joe Biden: Institutional, coalition-oriented and alliance-focused leadership operating within a competitive democratic system.

2. Key differences

Dimension	Xi Jinping	Joe Biden
Political system	One-party socialist system	Federal democratic system
Decision-making	Highly centralised	Institutionally constrained
Foreign policy	Strategic autonomy and national power	Alliances and multilateral partnerships
Economic approach	State-led strategic sectors	Market economy with industrial policy
Leadership horizon	Long-term strategic planning	Electoral and institutional cycles
Major emphasis	National rejuvenation	Alliances, democracy and US leadership

3. Overall assessment

Both leaders emphasised national interests and strategic competition, but **Xi represents centralised long-term state leadership, while Biden represents institutionally constrained coalition-based leadership.**

(c) 2022 FIFA World Cup and Politics of the Arab World

1. Introduction

The **2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar** was more than a sporting event; it became a platform for examining Arab identity, diplomacy, human rights and the changing geopolitical importance of the Gulf.

2. The World Cup enhanced Qatar's soft power

- 2.1 Qatar demonstrated its capacity to host a globally significant event.
- 2.2 Massive infrastructure investment strengthened its international visibility.
- 2.3 The tournament projected Arab culture and identity to a global audience.
- 2.4 Qatar used sports diplomacy to reinforce its international profile.

3. The tournament highlighted major political debates in the Arab world

- 3.1 Labour rights and migrant-worker conditions attracted international criticism.
- 3.2 LGBTQ+ rights and cultural differences generated controversy.
- 3.3 Palestinian symbols and support for Palestine became visible throughout the tournament.
- 3.4 The event demonstrated the growing use of sports as an instrument of soft power.

4. Broader significance

- Gulf states increasingly use mega-events to diversify their global influence.
- Sports diplomacy complements economic and political diplomacy.
- The tournament contributed to a stronger global visibility of Arab identity.
- It demonstrated the tension between Western liberal expectations and differing cultural-political norms.

5. Conclusion

The Qatar World Cup demonstrated that **sport in the contemporary Arab world is increasingly intertwined with diplomacy, identity, soft power and geopolitical influence.**