

## Pakistan on the World Stage: A Comprehensive Appraisal of its Engagement in the United Nations (2014-2023)

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### ABSTRACT

The study is proposed to explore how has Pakistan's engagement with the UN evolved during the specified period? And what are the challenges faced by Pakistan in its engagement with the UN and how to overcome those challenges? Qualitative method of research has been used in this study. Both descriptive and analytical methods of inquiry have been employed. Data has been collected through books, academic articles, reports, government websites, UN websites, newspaper reports and articles. Analysis of this data has been made to gather details and formulate recommendations. Pakistan has a dynamic pattern of engagement with the UN since its inception. This involves a two dimensional collaboration with the UN i.e. on the internal and external dimension. Internally, different UN agencies are working for humanitarian assistance and development initiatives in the country. Externally, Pakistan is cooperating with the UN through its participation in the UN peacekeeping operations in various regions throughout the globe.

### Introduction:

International forums are the platforms to facilitate collaboration among member states on numerous subjects of economic, diplomatic and political nature. States join these organizations for various reasons including promoting economic cooperation, addressing common security concerns, fostering diplomatic relations and participating in collaborative efforts to tackle regional and global issues. To pursue its national interests through involvement in international forums is one of the objectives of every state. Pakistan is no exception to that. Therefore, it is an essential feature of its foreign policy to seek to maneuver the key international diplomatic, economic and political forums to enhance its international standing and accomplish. This study intends to overview Pakistan's performance in the United Nations (UN) during the period from 2014-2023. For our purpose of analysis, an assessment of Pakistan's successes and failures while engaging with the UN has been made. This study has based this analysis on two dimensions i.e. internal and external dimension.

The study focuses on how Pakistan's engagement with the UN has evolved during the specified timeframe. In addition to that, Pakistan's participation in global conferences and



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summits and its engagement in economic and political initiatives have been discussed. International peacekeeping efforts and Pakistan's role in this regard has also been focused. Furthermore, challenges faced by Pakistan in this regard have also been examined and recommendations have been made for enhancing Pakistan's performance in the UN.

### **Objective**

To make an assessment of Pakistan's achievements and challenges in the UN during the specified period

### **Research Questions**

- 1-How has Pakistan's engagement with the UN evolved during the specified period?
- 2-What are the challenges faced by Pakistan in its engagement with the UN and how to overcome those challenges?

### **Research Methodology**

Qualitative method of research has been used in this study. Both descriptive and analytical methods of inquiry have been employed. Data has been collected through books, academic articles, reports, government websites, UN websites, newspaper reports and articles. Analysis of this data has been made to gather details and formulate recommendations.

### **Background**

International relations have advanced significantly since the Westphalia Treaty was signed in 1648. Not only do relationships exist between states, but global institutions (intergovernmental organizations). Abbott and Snidal (1998) have highlighted the significance of international organizations, their functions and the reasons why states act through international organizations (IOs). The authors identify "centralization and independence" as the vital features of formal international organizations which make them a preferable option for states than any other mode of "institutionalization" (Abbott & Snidal, 1998, p. 4). Wasi (2022) observe that multiple dynamics inspire states to participate in the UN and it is also true of Pakistan. Pakistan's own conditions and requirements shape its outlook in its engagement with the UN. Wasi (2022) acknowledges that Pakistan's devotion to adhere to the objectives of the UN and its contribution towards the UN has been adequately positive. It has helped Pakistan in tackling with its predicaments in social, financial and diplomatic arenas.

Pakistan has contributed positively towards its engagement with the UN through its role in the UN peace keeping missions. Krishnasamy (2002) perceives the beginning of 1990s as a particularly active period for Pakistan's peace keeping role under the UN as during this period, the country served in multiple regions of the world. The author regards both financial and political objectives as key motives behind Pakistan's positive role in the UN peace keeping endeavors. Krishnasamy (2002) recognizes Pakistan's remarkable ability towards the task of peace keeping in difficult situations. Rizvi (2017) observes that Pakistan's peace keeping mission's efforts and its humanitarian assistance under the UN's auspices have been remarkably impressive. Farwa and Garewal (2018) argue that the UN peacekeeping operations are a form of soft power and Pakistan through its active role can hugely benefit in this regard being a significant contributor of these operations. This can serve for Pakistan as a means of promoting its soft image in the world but it needs to be highlighted in a befitting manner. Pakistan can utilize its peacekeeping efforts as a platform to portray its soft image and increase its influence. Shafi and Hashmi (2020) note that there is a need to highlight the "peace characterization" of Pakistan with reference to its contribution in the UN peace keeping missions (p. 101). The negative propaganda by the adversaries has managed to obscure it from the eyes of the world at large (Shafi and Hashmi, 2020).

Najimdeen (2020) maintains that UN peacekeeping missions now largely serve as a way of diplomacy for the participant states. In the evolving international environment, conventional forms of diplomacy in which the diplomatic interactions were the sole prerogative of the foreign office and professional diplomats, have given way to a new form. Now the troops on ground have increasingly started to represent their states in the UN peacekeeping operations. This can be

termed as „peacekeeping diplomacy“. Pakistan is a case in point where a country's peacekeeping contributions serve as a form of diplomacy and Pakistan is an example for the other states for its performance in the peacekeeping efforts.

The issue of structural changes in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has been debated since long. Bibi and Bukhari (2021) explore the consequences for Pakistan of Indian success in securing a permanent seat in the UNSC. This situation will bound to create a deep seated insecurity in Pakistan given the fact of India being its traditional arch rival. The unresolved status of the Kashmir issue also adds to the complexity of Pakistan's concerns. There would be grave implications for Pakistan politically, economically and strategically in case of India acquiring a permanent seat in the UNSC. Usman, Ahmad and Khalid (2022) explain Pakistan's advocacy for reforms in the structure of the UNSC and Pakistan's desire to serve as a permanent member of the UNSC. The incapacitation of the UNSC due to the veto power of its five permanent members has been a cause of concern for Pakistan. According to the authors, Pakistan has shown its willingness to become a permanent member of the UNSC due to its strong credentials and wants the number of non-permanent members to increase (Usman, Ahmad and Khalid, 2022). Zaman (2022) notes Pakistan regards the Indian bid to become a permanent member of the UNSC as a danger for its interests in South Asia. By employing "Regional Security Complex Theory", the author contends that Pakistan's outlook towards structural changes in the UNSC is largely shaped by its apprehensions of its own security in the region in the face of a belligerent India (Zaman, 2022, p. 5). Pakistan's concerns on Kashmir issue plays a substantial part in this regard. This is the major reason behind Pakistan's disapproval of expanding the permanent members of the UNSC.

Pakistan collaborates with the UN for human development and humanitarian assistance through various UN agencies. Nisar (2020) explores the contribution of the UNDP United Nations Development Program to improve the socio-economic condition of women in rural Punjab. According to Nisar (2020), the UNDP has positively impacted the lives of women through its initiatives in the fields of employment generation, health, education, agriculture, political participation of women and decreasing violence against women. Abass, Nadeem and Majoka (2021) examine the "United Nations Sustainable Development Goal-4" (p. 340) in the context of Pakistan. The SDGs are an international growth agenda which the member states of the United Nations agreed upon in 2015. The authors discuss "SDG goal 4" which focuses on better education facilities for everyone. This has great significance for Pakistan as in Pakistan, education facilities need to be revamped.

The existing literature on Pakistan's role in the UN is largely focused on one or the other dimension of the issue. It lacks a comprehensive approach to make an assessment of Pakistan's contributions and the challenges faced by the country in this regard. The study at hand seeks to fulfill this requirement by discussing Pakistan's engagement with the UN on two dimensions i.e. internal and external. The internal dimension has focused on Pakistan's cooperation with the UN agencies working for humanitarian assistance and development in different spheres. The analysis on the external dimension has endeavored to understand Pakistan's peacekeeping efforts in the UN peacekeeping missions, and its engagement with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on different issues. Given the comprehensive nature of this analysis, this study seeks to highlight challenges faced by Pakistan in its collaboration with the UN and ways to overcome those challenges have been suggested.

### **Two Dimensions of Pakistan's Engagement with the UN**

Pakistan has been a member of the United Nations since its inception in 1947. It actively participates in various UN agencies, programs, and peacekeeping missions. Pakistan's engagement with the UN can be analyzed on two dimensions:

- i-Internal dimension
- ii-External dimension

### **Internal Dimension of Pakistan's Engagement with the UN**

Internal dimension relates to Pakistan's collaboration with the UN agencies engaged in efforts of humanitarian assistance and development in the country.

#### **Humanitarian Assistance and Development**

Pakistan engages with UN agencies involved in humanitarian assistance and development projects. Pakistan has been a partner and participant in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Pakistan collaborates with the UNDP on a range of development initiatives, and the UNDP supports the country in achieving its development goals particularly focusing on poverty reduction, governance and rule of law, environmental sustainability, gender equality and crisis response. UNDP under its global program named "Climate Promise" is actively working with Pakistan to render institutional backing for achieving low-emission development and effectively dealing with the climate change crisis (UNDP, November 24, 2023).

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has installed "four Agriculture Training Centers (ATCs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" for increasing the capacity of farmers to cultivate substitute crops and eliminate prohibited crops (UNDP Pakistan, September 7, 2023). Samuel Rizk, Resident Representative, UNDP Pakistan reiterated his commitment to work with Pakistan to fully realize the goal of ensuring the basic right "of all individuals and communities to be free from want, free from fear, and free from indignity" (Rizk, December 8, 2023). Pakistan is one of those countries which have embraced United Nations SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) 2030 and have established SDGs centers in different parts of the country. However, Pakistan needs to upgrade its performance on SDG-4 which is relevant to providing quality education to all its citizens. (Abbass, Nadeem & Majoka, 2021).

#### **External Dimension of Pakistan's Engagement with the UN**

External dimension includes Pakistan's engagement with the UN in those spheres that have significant bearing on Pakistan's international image and its foreign policy goals.

#### **Peacekeeping Contributions**

Peacekeeping missions conducted by the United Nations (UN) are essential to preserving global stability and creating conducive environment for enduring peace and security in the conflict ridden parts of the globe. During the Arab-Israeli war in 1948, the pioneer UN peacekeeping operation was initiated and since then, various UN peacekeeping missions have been deployed in different regions of the world (Shah, 2020).

States participate in UN peacekeeping missions for a variety of reasons ranging from improving their international image and standing to pursuing their foreign policy objectives. However, their own security concerns largely motivate states for this cause. Those states which have continued enmity with another state are more willing to make contribution to the peacekeeping missions. In addition to that, those governments which apprehend overthrow or rebellion seek to station troops away and a significant surge may be observed in their peacekeeping contributions. This suggests that the security issues domestically or internationally can motivate states to participate in UN peacekeeping operations (Kathman & Melin, 2016). Velázquez (2010) provide another explanation and observe that states having outwardly focused policies with an integration of external and security strategies have a high likelihood of making contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations. On the other hand, states having domestic security policies and with segregation in security and external policies are less likely to contribute to these operations

Pakistan has a significant history of contributing troops, policemen and civilian professionals to UN peacekeeping missions. Pakistani peacekeepers have been deployed to various conflict zones around the world, including in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Pakistan dispatched its inaugural peacekeeping force under the UN mandate to the Congo in 1960. Its contributions to UN peacekeeping operations in "Congo, Darfur, Haiti, Liberia, West Sahara, Central African Republic, Sudan" (Khan & Bashir, 2020, p. 74), Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast,

to name a few, have been substantial ever since. Pakistan's involvement in the UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia stretches a long period of more than 25 years.

Pakistan has deployed "more than 200,000 men and women...to 46 UN missions" (United Nations Peacekeeping, August 14, 2022) in 28 countries on almost every continent over the past 60 years. Pakistan's peacekeeping missions to the UN include serving in "Congo (1960-1964), New Guinea (1962-1963), Namibia (1989-1990), Kuwait (1991-1993), Haiti (1993-1996), Cambodia (1992-1993), Bosnia (1992-1996), Somalia (1992-1996), Rwanda (1993-1996), Angola (1995-1997), East Slavonia (1996-1997), Sierra Leone (1999-2005), MONUSCO (1999-2010), Darfur (2007 to date), Central Africa (2014 to date)" (Shafi & Hashmi, 2020, p. 106). Nothing describes more precisely the illustrious career of Pakistan as a UN peacekeeper than these words of Ban Ki-moon, the former Secretary General of the UN "More than 100 countries contribute troops and police for United Nations peacekeeping missions. Pakistan is number one." (United Nations Secretary General, August 13, 2013).

Up to 169 peacekeepers from Pakistan, 24 of whom were officers, have given their lives while performing their duties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, May 29, 2022). Pakistan accounted for almost "10% of all the casualties" incurred by UN peacekeeping missions since their inception. The highest UN honor, "the Dag Hammarskjold Medal", was given to "97 Pakistani peacekeepers" in recognition of their bravery (Islam, Mehmood & Khan, 2022, p. 455). In February 2018, Pakistan became the "fifth largest contributor of uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping" (United Nations Peacekeeping). More than "4000 Pakistani peacekeepers" are now involved in "eight peace operations" (United Nations Peacekeeping, August 14, 2022).

The UN has been honoring Pakistan by appointing it to substantial peacekeeping positions like "Special Envoy and Advisor to the UN Secretary General, Army Advisor at the Ministry of Peacekeeping Operations, Chief Military Monitor, Force and Deputy Force Commanders, and others." (Islam, Mehmood & Khan, 2022, p. 455). The UN Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications Alison Smale lauded Pakistan's peacekeeping role saying, "it is one of the largest troop and police contributor to UN peacekeeping. Its soldiers are risking their lives to advance the cause of peace, and we at the UN couldn't be more thankful," (Shakeel, July 12, 2018). In addition to peacekeeping, Pakistan has contributed in a wide range of activities, such as setting up free medical camps, restoring communication infrastructure, and community reconstruction in the troubled regions (Khan & Bashir, 2020).

Currently, twelve UN peacekeeping operations are in progress according to the most recent data as of July 31, 2023. Pakistan is participating in six of them (United Nations Peacekeeping Data).

#### **Pakistan's Contribution in Latest UN Peacekeeping Missions (as of February 2023)**

<b>UN Peacekeeping Mission</b>	<b>Number of Pakistani Military Personnel</b>	<b>Pakistan's Position as the Top Military Contributor</b>
United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).	13	4th
United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	1767	2nd
United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)	03	10th
United Nations Interim Security Force For Abyei (UNISFA)	586	3rd
United Nations Mission in the Republic	288	9th

of South Sudan (UNMISS)		
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)	1314	3rd

Source: United Nations Peacekeeping Data <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/data>

Pakistan hosted a two-day meeting from 30-31 August 2023 in Islamabad with Japan as a co-host on the theme of improving the “safety and security of UN peacekeepers” attended by “senior UN Secretariat officials and “members representing the 156-nation UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.” (The Express Tribune, August 28, 2023).

Female peacekeepers of Pakistan have also played significant part in assisting “in conflict and post-conflict situations” as “psychologists, stress counselors, vocational training officers, gender advisors, doctors, nurses, operations officers, information officers, and logistics officers” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, May 29, 2022). Since Pakistan military began integrating female peacekeepers, around 450 female Pakistani soldiers have participated in various peacekeeping missions across the globe (Malik, Awan & Ibrahim, 2023, p.191). The first Pakistani Female Engagement Team joined the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) in 2019 (United Nations Peacekeeping, August 14, 2022).

Pakistan has been successfully employing the opportunity of UN peacekeeping to project its dedication to world security and peace. Its diplomatic status at the UN and other related venues has also improved as a result of its active peacekeeping involvement. Becoming involved in UN peacekeeping missions is currently a fundamental aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy as it offers Pakistan a good chance to become more visible internationally.

#### **Pakistan’s Involvement with the United Nations Security Council**

Pakistan has been involved in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in various capacities. The UNSC is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, and its membership includes five permanent members with veto power (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms. Pakistan has the honor of having its “diplomat, Muhammad Zafarulla Khan” to be elected as “the president of the United Nations General Assembly in 1962” (The Express Tribune, June 23, 2023).

Pakistan has served as a non-permanent member of the UNSC seven times i.e. “in 1952-1953, 1968-1969, 1976-1977, 1983-1984, 1993-1994, 2003-2004” and 2012-2013 (The Express Tribune, June 23, 2023). During its most recent tenure (2012-2013), Pakistan actively participated in discussions and decision-making processes related to global security issues. The country has consistently advocated for the rights of developing nations, peacekeeping efforts, and resolutions to regional conflicts. Pakistan has again showed its resolve to strive for the non-permanent seat on the UNSC for the term 2025-2026. The Asia-Pacific Group has unanimously endorsed Pakistan’s bid in this regard. The General Assembly will choose the candidate for the position in June 2024 in New York (The Express Tribune, June 23, 2023).

Various attempts have been made to bring about structural reforms in the United Nations Security Council since the establishment of the UN. The focus of these efforts has been an expansion in the numerical strength of the UNSC. No such effort has borne fruit till date as the five permanent members of the UNSC have consistently resisted any such move (Khan, 2015). In addition to it, the complexity of procedure for any change in the Charter of the UN and the lack of agreement on a selection benchmark has proved to be another hindrance in this regard. However, there has been a renewal of impetus for the expansion in the UNSC since 2004 due to the concerted efforts of powerful states that desire to pursue a place in the UNSC.

Pakistan has been a strong voice for reforming the Security Council, advocating for changes to its membership and operational procedures to make the body more transparent, equitable, and responsible. Pakistan’s upright stance has consistently been to oppose any increase in the permanent members of the UNSC. Therefore, Pakistan opposes “the G-4 (Brazil, Germany, Japan and India)” pursuit of “individual permanent membership” (Pakistan Mission to

United Nations). Being a member of the “Uniting for Consensus (UfC) group”, Pakistan supports reasonable reforms in the UNSC favoring only an increase in non-permanent members (Pakistan Mission to United Nations).

### **Pakistan’s Role in the UN to Combat Islamophobia**

Pakistan has been consistent in its stance against religious prejudice and faith related violence. In June 2019, Pakistan’s permanent representative in the UN, Dr Maleeha Lodhi presented “six-point agenda in the UN against anti-Islamic narratives” (Fareha, December 1, 2020). Pakistan’s former Prime Minister, Imran Khan in his address to the general debate of the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly on September 27, 2019, compellingly highlighted the issue of Islamophobia and growing hate crimes against the Muslims (Business Recorder, September 27, 2019).

On March 15, 2022, Pakistan presented a resolution in the UN General Assembly calling for designating a specific day for combating Islamophobia. The resolution was based on “the right to freedom of religion and belief” and was approved with the support of other fifty five states most of which were Muslim (Iqbal, March 17, 2022). Thus, with Pakistan’s efforts, March 15 was designated as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.

### **Israel’s War in Gaza and Pakistan’s Stance in the UNSC**

During the ongoing Israeli hostilities against Gaza unleashed after Hamas’ attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, Pakistan supports the rights of the Palestinians and has shown its utter disappointment on the UNSC failure of calling for a ceasefire (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, December 9, 2023). Pakistan’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Munir Akram in his address to the General Assembly debate on the issue of UNSC reforms, criticized the inability of the UNSC to stop the genocide of Palestinians by Israel and sought to warn against the expansion of the permanent members of the UNSC as it would “statistically multiply the prospects of its paralysis”. (The Express Tribune, November 18, 2023). In a top-level open debate, initiated by Brazil in the UN Security Council, Pakistan’s UN representative, Munir Akram said, “Pakistan hopes that the General Assembly will take action and demand an immediate ceasefire; full, unhindered, and sustainable humanitarian access to suffering people in Gaza,” (Iqbal, Dawn, October 22, 2023).

Stepping up its efforts to stress the international community to work for a ceasefire in Gaza, Pakistan presented a resolution on “Universal Realization of the Right of the People to Self-Determination” in the UN General Assembly. The resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly as numerous other states also supported it (Sajid, December 12, 2023). In his address to the Security Council meeting, Munir Akram called for “the immediate opening of the Aid Corridor to Gaza” and cessation of Israeli hostilities (Business Recorder, October 26, 2023). Pakistan reiterated its stance that the Israeli strikes on Gaza must be ended immediately. “The Council has been paralyzed due to the resistance and negative vote of a permanent member,” Pakistan’s permanent representative in the UN, Usman Jadoon, told the General Assembly. Furthermore, South African move to try Israel under the “Genocide Convention” in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was welcomed by Pakistan (Associated Press of Pakistan, January 10, 2024).

### **Challenges Faced by Pakistan in its Engagement in the UN**

On the internal dimension, Pakistan’s collaboration with different UN agencies is hampered by “structural weaknesses” of the country (Hippler and Ahmed, 2022, p. 148). Therefore, Pakistan is unable to take maximum advantage of the opportunities provided by this collaboration. Corruption and the inability to harness UN financial aids transparently portray the nature of the problems in this regard. This gives rise to a certain degree of trust deficit between Pakistan and the various UN agencies engaged with the country in different projects. The presence of traditional institutional structure and lack of digitalization proves to be another hindrance. Absence of proper information diffusion on the nature of UN’s agencies’ engagement with Pakistan prevents various segments of society to benefit completely and equitably. Furthermore,

many a times, agreements and projects are not properly implemented and executed due to poor resolve of the governments.

The external dimension reflects that it is a matter of concern that despite its active engagement with the UN since its inception, Pakistan has not been able to fully exploit the advantages of this robust involvement. Given Pakistan's sustained and exemplary role in the UN peacekeeping operations and its enormous sacrifices in the war on terrorism, its portrayal as a peaceful country could not be materialized. It is repeatedly labeled as a country harboring terrorist outfits with a consistent danger of falling its nuclear weapons into the hands of the terrorists. The world at large views it as a radicalized country where Taliban have a foothold. This situation makes it imperative that Pakistan is in need of reshaping its international characterization. The existing emphasis of Pakistan's foreign policy based on a narrow idea of "a perceived external security threat, largely from India" (Hippler and Ahmed, 2022, p. 135) is untenable. Therefore, it is essential for Pakistan to reshape its security perception keeping into consideration the changing global environment.

### **Recommendations**

- Pakistan needs to improve its infrastructure and to draw maximum benefit from its collaboration with the UN in the sphere of development.
- Financial aid provided by the UN agencies for various projects should be utilized in a transparent manner.
- Robust mechanism should be in place to materialize the plans and agreements agreed upon between the UN agencies and Pakistani government.
- Pakistan should utilize its peacekeeping contribution as a means to promote its soft image as a peace loving country and to ward off the misconceptions and negative propaganda by the unfriendly states which often portray Pakistan as a country harboring extremist and terrorist elements.
- Pakistan should step up its efforts to inhibit India's endeavor to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council as it would jeopardize Pakistan's national interests not only in terms of Kashmir issue but on other diplomatic, economic and political fronts.
- Pakistan should strive for balanced structural reforms in the UNSC encompassing limiting the veto power of the five permanent members and increasing the numerical strength of the non-permanent members.
- Economic self-sufficiency should be Pakistan's top most priority to enable it to achieve parity with India and assert for a permanent status for itself in the UNSC.

### **Conclusion**

Pakistan has a dynamic pattern of engagement with the UN since its inception. This involves a two dimensional collaboration with the UN i.e. on the internal and external dimension. Internally, different UN agencies are working for humanitarian assistance and development initiatives in the country. Externally, Pakistan is cooperating with the UN through its participation in the UN peacekeeping operations in various regions throughout the globe. Pakistan is also concerned with the proposals of reforms in the UNSC and it opposes any expansion of the UNSC's permanent membership particularly that of India's. It has raised its voice on the issue of Islamophobia and for the plight of the Palestinians on the forum of the UNSC. However, there are a few challenges that Pakistan is faced with as regards its engagement with the UN. These include infrastructure inadequacy to benefit from the UN agencies' development projects in the country. Pakistan is also required to focus on capitalizing on its peacekeeping contributions to portray its soft image internationally and dilute the misperceptions of being an extremist and terrorism harboring country.



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