



## RESEARCH PAPER

### Chinese Geo-Strategic Objectives and Economic Interests in Afghanistan under President Xi Jinping

<sup>1</sup>Farooq Ahmed    <sup>2</sup>Prof. Dr. Iram Khalid\*

1. Ph. D Scholar, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Chairperson, Department of Political Science, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Received:</b> August 26, 2021</p> <p><b>Accepted:</b> December 19, 2021</p> <p><b>Online:</b> December 21, 2021</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Afghanistan, BRI, China, NATO Withdrawal</p> <p><b>*Corresponding Author:</b> <a href="mailto:iramkrc.polsc@pu.edu.pk">iramkrc.polsc@pu.edu.pk</a></p>	<p>China has its own distinctive interests, concerns and strategies with respect to the changing security dynamics in Afghanistan. China has taken an active interest, though retaining a low profile and avoiding direct military interaction. China has exclusively relished on economic engagement actively and provided numerous financial aid and financial support in the rebuilding of Afghanistan's economy. The aim of this research study is to analyze the geo-strategic objectives and economic interests of China under the leadership of President Xi Jinping. This study looks at the actual diplomatic, economic and protection commitments of both countries as well as the basis of the geopolitical complexities – core variables that form China's current foreign policy to Afghanistan.</p>

## Introduction

China's foreign policy is not unique in its dealings with Afghanistan. State-owned Chinese companies expect resource extraction to fuel China's economy. In order to stabilize the country as it expects the security situation to improve, Beijing hopes to use the economic influence. Afghanistan would benefit from the development of Chinese infrastructure, but China's role for the future of Afghanistan is unclear.

This article shows how Beijing's actions shaped development in Afghanistan and how its development might shape its future, through Chinese activity in Afghanistan. The U.S. and China both have interests in Afghanistan's stability, but have pursued various stabilization policies. Ultimately, the emergence of the region as a world economic player or as an area of trouble constantly watched could be the result of Chinese investment in Afghanistan.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is the cornerstone of Chinese President Xi Jinping's new silk route programme, which serves as the base for the creation of vast economic power combined with strengthening defence, trade, and energy alliances. In order to continue connecting the Central Asian republics under a Chinese umbrella,

Chinese flagship project BRI, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could expand into Afghanistan. The major explanation for slow Chinese investment in Afghanistan is extreme insecurity and America's involvement, but these crucial things will unexpectedly shift in the future (Dave, & Kobayashi, 2018).

It is estimated that the size of Afghanistan's natural resources is around \$1 trillion, with Chinese companies being noted. For example, in 2008, a 30-year lease was issued in order to extract the world's second highest copper deposit (estimated to \$50 billion or less) to \$3.4 billion from the Chinese Metallurgical Group Corporation and the Jiangxi Copper Company Limited (JLC) group. In 2011 the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), which has nearly 87 million tonnes, received a \$400 million contract to drill three petroleum fields for 25 years. However, the mine and petroleum fields have made almost little gains and have angered the Afghan Government.

Following 9/11, the dedication of America and China to Afghanistan demonstrated the competitive foundations of the matrix of the strategy of great force. Since its vast mineral resources are of genuine interest to Chinese companies in Afghanistan, the Chinese government provides investment to protect those resources (Zhao, et al., 2019).

China has not been involved in war operations, but the highest share of Afghan minerals has been achieved. In 2007, in Mes Aynak (south of Kabul), China signed a \$3 trillion agreement for the rights to copper mines. The United States and other western nations who bear the hardest cost of the war in Afghanistan were clearly absent from the bidding process on the mineral reserves in Afghanistan and largely left to regional forces. While Afghan minerals do not benefit from the US financially, the political gains are likely to be extracted from the development of a more secure, less assistance dependence economy, which could reduce the pressure of America's long-term commitment in Afghanistan. The fear of many Afghan citizens that America is here to rob the money of the nation is also sidelined (Branco, 2020).

### **Literature Review**

Beijing has withdrawn from Afghanistan in 2014, with the most NATO troops having avoided Afghanistan from their previous stance of ignoring Afghanistan. It then sought to become Afghanistan's main corporate investor by declaring billions of dollars in copper-mining and oil discovery investments. Chinese firms have been active in Afghan infrastructure and construction programmes, and Beijing has greatly expanded some assistance to Afghanistan (Akhtar, & Sarkar, 2015).

Certainly, China will put itself in motion to ensure peaceful, healthy and stable Afghanistan in the last decade and, in effect, a peaceful, healthy, stable South Asia in the Asian century in comparison with the growing annoyance of the West. Indeed, China's increasing strength cannot afford to confront its neighbourhood, and especially Afghanistan, where NATO and the US already remain ascending. However, for its eventual power and economic cum political gains outside the region through Eurasia, China is set on a positive commitment with Afghanistan and Central Asia (Khan, 2015).

It would be incredibly difficult to reach democratic reconciliation in the world and there is no need for a fast fix. With respect to the idea that a 'vacuum' left by the US has been filled by the Chinese, the article claims that there is not really a so-called vacuum because the US military intervention was transient and US forces' withdrawal constitutes a return to the usual state of affairs (Huasheng, 2016).

Traditionally, PRC foreign policy, through bilateral lines, has handled Afghanistan and Pakistan separately and has avoided the kind of Afghan Pakistan link used for some time under the current administration. But if the Taliban again becomes a leading players in Afghanistan, Beijing could rely on Pakistani security talks to influence the Taliban to value the interest of the Chinese in Afghanistan and not encourage Uyghur and other anti-Peijing terrorists. China's policymaker will prefer that the Taliban be as least affected as possible in Afghanistan (Weitz, 2015).

China's political and economic profile has increased in Afghanistan in recent years, with its policy changing from 'calculated ignorance' to strategic involvement. Although China's actions may be focused on domestic constraints, the mechanism may also favour Afghanistan, especially as regards China's transcontinental connectivity initiatives (Pandey, 2019).

### **Historical Background**

Afghanistan-Chinese or Sino-Afghan relations have long been most pleasant, with trade relations between them dating from the Han Dynasty at least to the lucrative Silk Route. Currently, the embassies of both countries are in Beijing and Kabul, and the international borders are closed (Dai, 1966).

In the Han-Dayuan war, the Han defeated the Dayuan and gained Chinese control over northern parts of Afghanistan. Later in time, the Han dynasty established the Western Protectorate Regions to protect the Central Asian trade along the Silk Route.

November 605, in exchange of greater trading privileges with China, emissaries from what is now Afghanistan arrived at Luoyang (then Chinese capital). In 618 AD, the Tang Dynasty declared that Afghanistan belonged to China's sphere of control and the successive Tang Emperors wanted to impose by military means. The claims of the Tang Dynasty were reiterated. Under the Mongol dynasty, both territories were united shortly. The sustenance and expansion of the Silk Road was also contributed.

The trade ties between Afghanistan and China primarily included fruit and tea on the boundary between the two countries through the Xinjiang and Wakhan Corridors. In the Silk Road transmission Buddhism into the Chinese Han dynasty, Buddhist monks from the present-day Afghanistan region participated. In the 5th century, Faxian visited Afghanistan. In the 21st Century, China and Afghanistan aim to restart the Belt and Road Initiative on a New Silk Road

In 1939, Hui Muslim Ma Fuliang and Uyghur Muslim Isa Yusuf Alptekin came to Egypt, Syria, and Turkey to get war assistance from Muslim countries for China (An, & Gang, 2012).

On 20 January 1955, the People's Republic of China entered into diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Afghanistan. Abdul Samad was in Peking in 1955 the first Afghan Envoy. In addition, Afghanistan was one of the first to recognize the PRC.

In January 1957, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai and Deputy Prime Minister He Long visited Afghanistan. This was China's first visit to Afghanistan in the history of Sino-Afghan relations.

The Border Treaty was ratified on 22 November 1963 by Beijing, China and Afghanistan. This Treaty ended the Afghan-controlled Wakhan territorial dispute between the Afghan Province of Badakhshan and the Chinese autonomous zone of Xinjiang Uyghur. The 92.45 km boundary between China and Afghanistan.

During the Cold War, in Alliance policy in South Asia, Afghan crisis played a critical role. From 1979 to 1989, Pakistan played an important role in the Afghan crisis as an acme of US-China-Soviet triangular strategic relaxation and agreement. The great geopolitical goal of the USSR was both to envelop China and to challenge the US by expanding its presence in the Third World. The Soviet troops stationed at the northern frontier and in Mongolia, the soviet advocacy of Vietnam's 1978 war in China and Vietnam, and the extension of the Soviet forces to Afghanistan in 1979 were facing three-dimensional challenges. Pakistan and Iran were widely said to have been targeted specifically by the Soviet Union at the time. China was profoundly anxious about its "main ally" (Pakistan) and was afraid that Baluchistan would be used for warm water by the Soviets (Hilali, 2001).

One of the criteria for China in China to ease in Sino-Soviet relations was that of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. China viewed the Soviet presence as a regional threat to itself and its ally Pakistan (to avoid the Soviet Union from circling China). China provided arms against the Soviet marionet government to Afghan guerrillas with potential US assistance .

China has held a low profile in Afghanistan for the past two decades, with a stronger emphasis on energy and materials than peace negotiators. However, China has been more accountable for sustaining regional peace since 2014.

### **Relations after 9/11 (Changes in Chinese Interests)**

The China has minimized its involvement, contributing only \$197 million, to twenty-third on the list of Foreign Donors since the beginning of the war in Afghanistan in 2001. Beijing changed its operation from the beginning of 2012, however, in anticipation of the coming US departure, increasing its growth in Afghanistan. This means that Peking accepts that Afghanistan contributes to the future security of China (Imran, 2019).

Since 2001, China has supported Afghanistan with a minimum aid commitment. Its contribution to the rebuilding of Afghanistan was a very modest \$250 million. Between 2001 and 2012, China followed a low-key approach to Afghanistan. Andrew Small, an American think tank member, states, narrowly in his description that the German Marshall Fund: "Until then, [End of 2011], China had sat entirely on the side (Small, 2015).

The two years have gone, China has reached a far more proactive tone. China's Kabul and neighbors in Afghanistan took several multilateral and bilateral diplomatic routes. In 2012, Zhou Yongkang, the former chief of security, visited Kabul. To become the leading Chinese leader in decades to visit the world. China has named a special envoy to Afghanistan in 2014 and has committed itself to greatly expand its economic presence in the region (Swanstrom, & Tucker, 2019).

According to Vladimir Putin, the 9/11 attacks and eventual Afghanistan invasion accelerated the SCO. The forum was founded as the SCO in 2001 and focused on the three evils of terrorism, separatism and religious extremism (Pannier, 2019).

Even the vast armed force cannot fight a committed resistance, as the U.S. experience indicates in Iraq and Afghanistan. China learned this lesson and is very cautious not only to respect the five values, but also to avoid control of an internal dispute in a foreign country, to intervene in the internal affairs of each nation. In the sense of its broader foreign policy, Beijing has engaged Afghanistan. It is not military engagement, but aims to involve existing governments in programs of economic growth and to reinforce them. Security and market growth are the main ingredients for protection as the following chapters illustrate (Khan, & Ayaz, 2017).

### **Change in China's Objectives in Afghanistan**

With its broad-based interests and requirements, China has an increasing diverse economy. China has a large stock of foreign reserve currencies used for funding projects through government-backed development banks due to China's export-led growth. These banks have convenient access by Chinese SOEs to capital to finance big ventures. The Metallurgical Company of China (MCC) and Jangxi Copper Company (JCC) were able to obtain financial reserves, which allowed them to overbid all the other competitive countries, when the Afghanistan government opened Aynak copper deposits for tenders. The successes of the MCC and JCC were not a result of a PRC-orchestrated strategy of clear intervention in Afghanistan, as Erica Downs points out in her paper China Buys in Afghanistan, but rather the result of systemic influences. The Chinese state-owned banks' strategy was to offer preferential loans to foreign-owned businesses. MCC and JCC sought to diversify their stocks and the MCC already had experience in Pakistan's Sandiak copper/gold mine. MCC and JCC have led the way for China's intervention in Afghanistan in this situation.

China is not the only one who insists on exploiting the mineral resources of Afghanistan. After it released a mine prospects study in Afghanistan in 2002, the World Bank has been involved in the production of the Aynak deposit. Many foreign bodies have tried, but Minister of Mines Mohammad Adel took charge and manipulated the procedure

to ensure that the contract was awarded to the MCC for the Aynak tendering process. Multilateral institutions were successful and failing as they tried to promote growth in Afghanistan, but foreign organizations were still highly concerned with the criminal facets of Afghan economics, as were China and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In March 2009, the SCO held a special meeting on Afghanistan to stop the movement of drugs and extremism from Afghanistan. The conference centered on it has become a big problem to disperse opium from Afghanistan to the region's neighboring countries. Opium production was projected in 2004 to account for 49% of the Afghan economy, but fell by 2011 to 15%. This is due to a mixture of efforts to eliminate and sustain the other crops, as well as the expansion of the lawful economy in Afghanistan. Poppy farming poses a major barrier to the potential growth of the Afghan economy, supplying funds to groups for traffickers and militants, distorting the demand for farm goods and fueling corruption among national authorities.

All speculation about Afghan economic growth is focused on the presumption that Afghanistan is safe and secure. Beijing has made tremendous efforts to fight unrest and extremism, while retaining strict controls on Xinjiang economically.<sup>6</sup> The directed essence of the RPC's economic growth and security practices poses the issue: how important does Xinjiang be to the RPC? The oppression-rebellion loop has contributed to terrorism in Xinjiang, and lives on in groups such as the Islamic Revolution in East Turkistan (ETIM). How China handles ETIM and its resident Muslim community will help to decide the response of foreign terrorist jihadi networks to China's global development. The relevance of Afghanistan and Xinjiang to the China is highlighted in the studies and papers on China's other priorities in Central Asia.

#### **Situations and Change in objectives after Withdraw of NATO Forces from Afghanistan in 2014**

The Afghan economy was profoundly distorted by NATO's intervention in Afghanistan. It is estimated that 97% of the Afghan economy has a link with, or a direct effect of, international militancy.<sup>103</sup> Security funding and government assistance contributed to 47,5% of Afghanistan's gross domestic product in 2011. When federal support declines quickly, the government spending will be greatly impacted and in stabilized if military services are failing to compensate.

China is actively participating in Afghanistan's peace process and rebuilding, but Pakistan will need greater strength in Afghanistan and the CPEC and BRI progress after US troops are withdrawn from Afghanistan. By their joint efforts, the Indo-US Strategic Partnership can be countered. China is contained in US policy change towards Asia, and Pakistan is a credible ally to counterbalancing Indo-US intentions, confining India to South Asia (Branco, 2020).

The future of Afghanistan was in doubt when the United States and NATO mission comes to an end at the end of 2014. China shares Afghanistan's boundary, shares Afghanistan's concerns about terrorism and security, and is committed to the development of its resources (Scobell, 2015).

When US troops withdraw next year, Afghanistan will also continue to collapse steadily as a democracy manifested over the last two decades. Corruption among high-level officials and limited government control in most of the Afghan provinces showed that democracy has always been an illusion in Afghanistan, to fulfil America's demands for continued aid. When the illusion disappears, the façade will also be protected. The Afghan citizens who want to broaden and advance democracy and people who have only used democracy for political capital and financial incentives will be questioned.

In Afghanistan, Chinese growing influence can even shift styles of government to be like Beijing — a system more hierarchical and autocratic in nature, not opposed by the Taliban. In the next few years, efforts to reconstruct Afghanistan will be crucial.

The Government of Afghanistan is put in a position of continued reliability on the international community before other earnings are produced with NATO forces withdrawing and major extraction projects not going online in the near future.

As far as Chinese SOEs are under construction in Afghanistan for the Aynak copper mine and the Amy Darya oil field ventures are concerned, both projects have been exposed to reports of corrupt tenders and considerable construction delays. These delays could emerge out of domestic policy, lack of stability, be the result of a policy from Beijing against stagnation of growth in Afghanistan before NATO and US forces withdraw. Chinese investors are uncertain about the feasibility of their investments. The proof given in this section should be that the delays are caused not by collusion, but by internal politics and instability. The presence of Beijing in Afghanistan is a win-win in the interests of both the US and China. In order to support economic prosperity, China's SOE would provide Afghanistan with an economic boost. American needs are served, as the first path to defense has struggled to achieve peace after more than a decade of war. China's SOEs may be free to fly on US and NATO safety progresses, but for US security priorities future stability in Afghanistan is more important. The acts of Beijing in Afghanistan are not special and are consistent with the growth trend developed by China in other fields, such as Africa. In order to stabilize the government and region, the United States must welcome and focus on fostering China's investment in Afghanistan.

Beijing tackled security challenges posed by Xinjiang ethnic minorities and their experience could be helpful when it comes to addressing Afghan ethnic groups. While Afghanistan is by no means Beijing's primary foreign policy priority, the opportunity for future economic participation in Central and South Asia is reflected, and China will gain on a long-term basis.

### **Matters of both countries in Economic Sphere**

The subject of diplomatic relations between Kabul and Beijing focuses on agreements between the Chinese SOE and the development of Afghan resources, and on the public face of China's operation in Afghanistan, the Aynak copper mine and Amu Darya oil field grants. This widely noticeable multibillion dollar schemes are prominently part of the media's talk of the position and importance of China in Afghanistan. The substance, motives and consequences of the Mes Aynak and Amu Darya projects as the biggest

projects to date in Afghanistan. Every project is a case study of how state-owned corporations, the Chinese government and the government in Afghanistan communicate. The trends and motives in the two countries' interactions, and explores potential guiding factors and strategies by examining these projects. Afghanistan is incorporated into Beijing's seemingly functional regional economic growth program. Whilst trade ties between Afghanistan, Central Asia, Pakistan and Iran offer Chinese companies a window on how China sees the energy stability and economic trends of China's periphery, they offer a potential for growth in market share. Beijing claims that economic growth has the benefit of China and abroad and helps China to have a positive effect on peripheral peace. We will assess the potential policy posture of the People's Republic of China in relation to Afghanistan by analyzing prospective projects and their relevance.

- The Memorandum of Understanding was reached in 2016 by both countries and Beijing pledged Kabul at least \$100 million. The first direct train from China to Hairatan crossed in September 2016. Air corridors between Ürümqi and Kabul are also planned.
- It has developed cables for Afghanistan with fiber optics since 2017.
- China began its oil extraction in the Amu Darya Basin in June 2018.

### **Chinese Interests in Afghanistan in the Tenure of Current President Xi Jinping**

All these efforts became practical advantages for Chinese and Afghan populations as concrete embodiments of Chinese President Xi Jinping's thinking regarding diplomacy in Afghanistan and China-Afghanistan ties. Xi really knows the rules of the creation of human civilization, with the imagination and intuition of a great strategist. Centered on a sound evaluation of China's historical condition and international growth, he has proposed a range of new concepts, recommendations and initiatives.

The One Belt, One Road (OBOR) Initiative was introduced in October 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping. By integrating the region into a coherent economic area through modern infrastructure, enhanced cultural exchange or expanded trade, it facilitates connectivity between China and Eurasia. Kabul could be connected with both the CPEC and OBOR to put together the region (Clarke, 2016). From the outset, Kabul pragmatically wanted the initiative One Belt, One Road (OBOR), to take part in two regional Chinese initiatives. The Beijing OBOR is connected to domestic projects in the Afghan infrastructure, such as the Afghanistan Railway Network, the construction of untapped resources and the National Afghan Ring Road (Rahman, & Shurong, 2017).

The BRI networks and eventual regional connectivity benefit the most from Afghanistan. China also helped develop the Kabul Jomhuriat Hospital, the Kabul Vocational National College and the Kabul University School and Auditorium. The Air Freight Corridor Afghanistan-China and its frequent freighter train services have been used to export Afghan goods in particular to Central Asia, the Persian Gulf region, South Asia and China. Superb revenues have been developed and stimulated by the selling of rugs, dried fruit



and vegetables and so on for Afghanistan. Chinese goods and assistance were also supplied and supplied to Afghanistan with complete friendly feelings.

The vision of Xi embodies the ideals of cooperation, honesty, mutual benefit and inclusivity in neighborhood diplomacy to strengthen the advantages and promote shared growth of China's development. As a conventional friendly neighbor, Chinese aid in public health and humanitarian aid has been of great significance for Afghanistan. Founded with Chinese assistance, Jomhuriat Hospital in Kabul was commissioned in 2014. In 2017 the BRI Framework initiated the humanitarian relief initiative for the children with serious diseases; by the end of 2019, a total of 184 children with congenital heart diseases had been treated by the Chinese Red Cross Foundation in China. The Chinese government has given a strong support to the fight against the disease in Afghanistan after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. To date China has sent a total of 20 tons of three lots of pandemic response materials to two conferences with medical experts. The Chinese Embassy in Kabul sent parcels for food relief to civilians. Some NGOs and individuals contributed their own money to Afghanistan to spread the Chinese people's profound friendship.

The latest Chinese strategy was clarified by a Pentagon report in January, 2020. "China believes that regional stability will enhance trade market access, weaken western regional influence, and offset the role and strategic expansion of India in the region," the report said. "China wants to participate more in intra-Afghan discussions." The report underlines China's extended ties to "grow political and military engagement" with Afghanistan. It claimed that the partnership "was largely confined to economic issues prior to 2015."

China supported peace in Afghanistan on the diplomatic front. Beijing held informal meetings with Taliban and Afghan authorities, and high Taliban officials, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, invited public visits. It endorsed the mechanism leading to an initial peace agreement on 29 February 2020 between the USA and the Taliban. But Washington wasn't drawn by Beijing's low-key investment strategy.

In Afghanistan, China is following several big post-U.S. withdrawal period objectives. Only in view of geopolitical and logistical requirements could Afghanistan's vast natural resources be efficiently exploitable by close neighborhoods and no distant neighbors. China has also indicated that it can be relied on as a trusted partner as the only country in the region that has financial and economic capabilities (Mohanty, 2017).

Several projects were introduced by the Government of Afghanistan, including a National Export Strategy for 2018. The China-Afghan air corridor, which was introduced in November 2018, is an aspect of Afghanistan's strategy to realize its full export potential. The China air corridor was built to improve the pine nut industry in Afghanistan, which had suffered significant financial losses as a result of smuggling through Pakistan. In the air corridor, modest growth in exports of pine nut has been guided as expected (Ali, 2020).

It could conceivably make a major contribution to country's economic development by expanding the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) in China to Afghanistan. The

foundation of the BRI is the development of networking networks. The 2016 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between China and Afghanistan was a promise to foster BRI cooperation.

Improving the regional connectivity in the country would boost and deepen its incorporation into the BRI by implementing some of the rail corridors provided for in the NATO National Railway Program. The ANRP aims to create a regional transport hub for the world. China and northern Afghanistan connect to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor via the Chinese-Afghan Special Railway Transportation Project (SARTP), a planned Five Nations Railway Corridor (CPEC).

The digital component of the BRI is a second field in which China should make a contribution. Indeed, in Afghanistan since the early 2000s, ZTE and Huawei have been working. Starting in 2017, both firms had been interested in 3G deployment in Afghanistan to provide the Afghan Telecom Company with GSM, 3G network modules and CDMA. New arrangements for the laying of fiber optic networks were concluded under the BRI system in 2017. While it has yet to materialize, the Silk Road Cable Project is a theoretically exciting path for cooperation between China and Afghanistan. By investing in the growth and extension of Afghanistan's fiber optic networks, China may support Internet users in and around Afghanistan (Pradhan, 2018).

China has now been more interested in Afghanistan if its economic policy and initiative to advance peace and reconciliation fail when US forces have withdrawn, it could also entail changing its security status in Afghanistan (Khalil, 2016). While slowly, China's security position has grown. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and China-Afghan-Pakistan-Tajikistan Quadrilateral Collaboration and Coordination Mechanism include patrols at Tajikistan borders and efforts to help Afghanistan to improve its counter-terrorism capability through bilateral means.

The initial step for China's Afghanistan policies is protection and security in Xinjiang. As a part of building regional stability in Xinjiang, China sees Afghanistan. After 9/11, China has decreased its investment in Afghanistan and maintained a low-key profile. After 2014, China has committed itself to greatly expand its economic presence in the Afghanistan with multiple projects and connecting Afghanistan to grand projects such as BRI, CPEC and OBOR. MCC and JCC have led the way for China's intervention in Afghanistan in preferential loans to foreign-owned businesses situation. The speculation about Afghan economic growth is focused on the presumption that Afghanistan is safe and secure and China has made tremendous efforts in this regard. The future of Afghanistan was in doubt when the United States and NATO mission comes to an end at the end of 2014. In Afghanistan, China is following several big post-U.S withdrawal period objectives. Only in view of geopolitical and logistical requirements could Afghanistan's vast natural resources be efficiently exploitable by close neighborhoods and no distant neighbors. China has also indicated that it can be relied on as a trusted partner as the only country in the region that has financial and economic capabilities. The China has invested in energy, telecommunication and railway sector under BRI in the tenure of Xi Jinping.

## **Conclusion**

Economic and political cooperation with Afghanistan, guided by the liberal model that China considers to be the most crucial and permanent, is while stability could be the immediate priority. Such a pledge by China will strengthen the security situation in Afghanistan and introduce economic development; a win-win situation. In terms of natural reserves, Afghanistan is rich. China wants entry, providing economic help and thereby improving political ties, to such natural resources including Aynak copper and oil reserves. A part in tackling security issues of Afghanistan is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). On the other hand, Afghanistan's government embraces and positively expects this greater position because its partnerships from bilateral to strategic partnership have a moderate impact.

## References

- Akhtar, R. & Sarkar, J. (2015). *Pakistan, India, and China after the US Drawdown from Afghanistan*. Stimson Center.
- Ali, G. (2020). China–Pakistan cooperation on Afghanistan: assessing key interests and implementing strategies. *The Pacific Review*, 1-23.
- An, Z. & Gang, H. (2012). *Research on History of China-Afghanistan Relations*. Southeast Asian and South Asian Studies.
- Branco, C. M. (2020). *Afghanistan and the belt and road initiative*. In *The Belt and Road Initiative*, Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.
- Clarke, M. (2016). 'One belt, one road'and China's emerging Afghanistan dilemma. *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 70(5), 563-579.
- Dai, S. Y. (1966). China and Afghanistan. *The China Quarterly*, (25), 213-221.
- Dave, B. & Kobayashi, Y. (2018). China's silk road economic belt initiative in Central Asia: economic and security implications. *Asia Europe Journal*, 16(3), 267-281.
- Gradziuk, A. (2014). China's Interest in Its Cooperation with Russia, *PISM Bulletin*, no. 76 (671)
- Hilali, A. Z. (2001). China's response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. *Central Asian Survey*, 20(3), 323-351.
- Huasheng, Z. (2016). Afghanistan and China's new neighborhood diplomacy. *International Affairs*, 92(4), 891-908.
- Imran, S. (2019). Sino-US Involvement in Afghanistan. *Strategic Studies*, 39(3), 53-72.
- Khalil, A. B. (2016). The rise of China-Afghanistan security relations. *The Diplomat*
- Khan, H. U. & Ayaz, F. (2017). China-Afghanistan Relations after 9/11 and its Prospects for Peace Building in Afghanistan. In *Proceedings of International Conference on Inter-Regional Connectivity: South Asia and Central Asia*, Lahore: GC University.
- Khan, R. M. (2015). China's Economic and Strategic Interests in Afghanistan. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 2-9.
- Mohanty, B. (2017). *China in Afghanistan: Security, regional standing, and status*. Observer Research Foundation.
- Pandey, S. (2019). *Understanding China's Afghanistan policy: From calculated indifference to strategic engagement*. Observer Research Foundation.

- Pannier, B. (2019). Keeping Afghanistan in Afghanistan. *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, 34, 70-81.
- Pradhan, R. (2018). The Rise of China in Central Asia: The New Silk Road Diplomacy. *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(1), 9-29.
- Rahman, S. U. & Shurong, Z. (2017). Analysis of Chinese economic and national security interests in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the framework of One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative. *Arts and Social Sciences Journal*, 8(4), 1-7.
- Scobell, A. (2015). China ponders post-2014 Afghanistan: neither “All in” nor bystander. *Asian Survey*, 55(2), 325-345.
- Small, A. (2015). *The China Pakistan axis: Asia’s new geopolitics*. Random House India.
- Swanstrom, N. & Tucker, J. (2019). *China in Afghanistan—A New Force in the War in Afghanistan? Rebuilding Afghanistan in Times of Crisis: A Global Response*, RESOLVE Network 156-173.
- Weitz, R. (2015). *China and Afghanistan after the NATO Withdrawal*. United State, The Jamestown Foundation publications United State.
- Zhao, Y. Liu, X. Wang, S. & Ge, Y. (2019). Energy relations between China and the countries along the Belt and Road: An analysis of the distribution of energy resources and interdependence relationships. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 107, 133-144.