

## Relations of India and Pakistan with Central Asian Countries from the Perspective of Shanghai Cooperation Organization

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**Abstract** After the first expansion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the India's and Pakistan's relationship with Central Asian countries has become an issue that needs urgent research. This article analyzed their relationship, focusing on five aspects, i.e. the historical and cultural relations, political and military relations, the economic and energy cooperation, religious conditions and activities of religious organizations, and cooperation in science, technology and education. The author has found that neither India nor Pakistan doesn't have major investment or particularly close partners in Central Asia. It is not yet possible to say that Central Asia is an area where India and Pakistan are strategically competing. India and Pakistan will not have serious disputes on the SCO's issues involving Central Asia. For Joining India and Pakistan, we should consider more positive aspects, promote advantages and suppress disadvantages, and make staff expansion a positive factor for SCO to play a greater role.

**Keywords:** India; Pakistan; Central Asia; Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

**JEL Classification:** F50; F55; P33

In June 2017, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) expanded its membership for the first time, and India and Pakistan became its member states. From the perspective of the relationship between the new and old member states, it is basically clear that Russia and India have better relations, China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners, India is often hostile to Pakistan, but the India's and Pakistan's relationship with four SCO member states in Central Asia is difficult to draw conclusions, which may affect the development of the SCO, especially on certain issues. During the SCO Qingdao Summit in June 2018 and the SCO Bishkek Summit in June 2019, the interaction of India and Pakistan with other members attracted a lot of attention, especially with the four member states of Central Asia. From February to March 2019, tensions between India and Pakistan once again

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increased and the Kashmir conflict almost escalated into a full-scale war. This situation undoubtedly is challenging the SCO's ability to handle conflicts between member states. It is also testing the relationship between the SCO member states, especially the India's and Pakistan's relationship with other member states. Now it is necessary to make a basic analysis of the India's and Pakistan's relationship with four countries of Central Asia.

## **1. Historical connections and their heritage**

Historically, the Indian subcontinent has a close relationship with Central Asia. According to research, the interaction and communication between ancient India and Central Asia date back to the third millennium BC, when the nomadic Aryans appeared in Central Asian and Harappa culture in India [1]. Before Islam entered Central Asia, Central Asia had established religious ties with the Indian subcontinent. Buddhism flowed from India to Central Asia and formed its own characteristics there, which deeply affected the spread of Buddhism in China and later the development of Islam in Central Asia. The Mughal dynasty (1526-1858), which once flourished in the Indian subcontinent, originated in present-day Uzbekistan. At that time, due to various factors such as religion and politics, many Central Asian residents followed Babur (1483-1530) moved to the Indian subcontinent and established the Mughal dynasty in 1526. These people opened frequent personnel exchanges between these two regions and made a profound impact on literature, art, music, astronomy, architecture, etc. of both sides. Since Babur many of the rulers of the Mughal dynasty had been believers of the Naqshbandi sect. They kept in touch with the Muslim regime in Central Asia, especially in Uzbekistan and also promoted the development of Sufism in the Indian subcontinent. Religious and cultural ties in the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia was not interrupted even after the decline of the three Khanates of Khiva, Khanate of Kokand and Bukhara in Central Asia and the subsequent Russian conquest of Central Asia.

During the Soviet Union, especially after the Indian-Pakistani divide in 1947, the relationship between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia changed. On the one hand, due to the Cold War and the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations, the Soviet Union, adopting strategy "Draw India to counterbalance US and contain China"[2], established a very close relationship with India, which provided conditions for India and Central Asia to maintain cultural and religious ties. On the other hand, Pakistan mainly developed relations with the United States in the 1950s, and relations with China in the 1960s [3]. As a result, Pakistan did not establish friendly relations with the Soviet Union and was isolated from Central Asia.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, India and Pakistan actively developed relations with Central Asian countries, emphasizing historical and cultural ties as an important part of them. However, due to differences in territorial area, population, comprehensive national strength, and foreign policies, India has succeed in establishing the identity of the successor state of the Mughal dynasty for himself, thus logically drawing closer relations with Central Asian countries, especially with Uzbekistan, while Pakistan is clearly at a disadvantage in historical and cultural

ties with Central Asia. India tries to use this history and culture to strengthen its competitiveness and influence in Central Asia and widen the land passage (the north-south traffic corridor) to the north. These measures are conducive for India to building a favorable circumstance for itself behind Pakistan and striving for greater space for its development. Pakistan also tries to develop relations with Central Asian countries based on historical and cultural ties, thereby alleviating security pressure from India and promoting economic development, but due to limited interpretation of the Mughal dynasty, the historical and cultural ties that Pakistan says when interacting with Central Asian countries often lack realism. Central Asian countries are very clear about this. Therefore, Central Asian countries has more attention to the historical and cultural links with India, hoping to find materials constructing their own history and expand links with India. Above shown is very clearly in India's and Pakistan's relationship with Uzbekistan.

## **2. Relations in Politics, military and international organizations**

India and Pakistan are among the first countries to recognize the independence of Central Asian countries. Both of them established diplomatic relations with Central Asian countries in 1992. In the 1990s, there were several issues worthy of attention in India's political relations with Central Asian countries. First, India established friendship associations with Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Second, Uzbekistan joined the Non-Aligned Movement in September 1992 under Indian lobbying, and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan later became observers of this movement. Third, India and Uzbekistan's Intergovernmental Committee on Economic, Trade, and Science and Technology Cooperation has played an important role in promoting relations between the two countries since 1993. Fourth, India has provided loans and assistance to Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan since 1995. Fifth, India made a "New Silk Road Initiative" for Central Asia aimed at establishing transport corridors and connecting with Central Asian markets. For this purpose, in February 1997, India signed a tripartite agreement with Iran and Turkmenistan on international transport and transit corridors (highway and Railway). During this period, India's Central Asian foreign policy had three main tasks: 1) to get rid of the "strategic environment" from Pakistan. India was always viewing relations with Central Asian countries through the prism of the Indo-Pakistani conflict and the Kashmir problem; 2) to develop cooperation with the countries of Central Asia in countering terrorism and extremism, protecting national interests, ensuring regional security and maintaining stability; 3) to take part in the development of Central Asian resources [4]. But in general, India has not had much positive action in Central Asia before entering the 21st century.

In the 1990s, although Pakistan actively established friendly associations with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and promoted Central Asian countries to become members of the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Islamic Cooperation Organization, but the development of political relations between them was not as expected. This is not only the objective reason for the instability of the situation in Afghanistan and the lack of a "bridge" between the links, but also the subjective

factors of different Afghanistan policies. Take the relationship between Pakistan and Uzbekistan in the 1990s as an example. At that time, Pakistan and Uzbekistan were often in conflict, because Pakistan supported Afghanistan's government opposition, but Uzbekistan – its government forces.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the India's and Pakistan's political relations with Central Asian countries have begun to develop rapidly, high-level mutual visits have become frequent, and pragmatic agreements signed between governments have also increased significantly. In addition to creating conditions for economic cooperation, the anti-terrorist war in Afghanistan, that began after 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001, made security cooperation one of the important elements for developing political relations between India, Pakistan and Central Asian countries. However, the terrorism, extremism and the stability of Afghanistan are also the biggest obstacles for India and Pakistan to trade with Central Asian countries. In response to these security issues, India and Pakistan have begun cooperation with Central Asian countries in the field of military security. The main contents are as follows: 1) India and the four Central Asian countries have signed counter-terrorism agreements in 2003-2005. In 2009, India and Kazakhstan established a strategic partnership. In October 2011, the India -Kazakhstan friendship council group was established. That means they are beginning to cooperate actively at the legislative level; 2) India attaches great importance to security cooperation with Tajikistan. After the governments of India and Tajikistan signed the contract to modernize Ayni Airport in 2002, the Indian government has worked hard to obtain the lease right of this airport, paid 70 million U.S. dollars, but it has always been fruitless. However, it is reported that India established a Farkhor military base in Tajikistan in 2002 to take charge of Afghanistan's counter-terrorism operations; 3) Kazakhstan is a country in Central Asia, which has carried out the most military cooperation with India, especially with Pakistan. The main contents of cooperation include joint military exercises, military education, special forces training and military technical cooperation; 4) Uzbek terrorists (for example, IMU) also operate in Pakistan, becoming a common problem for Uzbekistan and Pakistan.

Promoting Central Asian countries to participate in international organizations that India and Pakistan dominate or have a greater say in speech is also an important aspect for them to develop the political relations with Central Asian countries. In this regard, Table 1 shows that Pakistan has achieved better results than India.

**Table 1.** Major international organizations with India, Pakistan and four Central Asian countries

	India	Pakistan	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Uzbekistan
United Nations	√	√	√	√	√	√
World Trade Organization	√	√	√	√	√	×

Organization of Islamic Cooperation	×	√	√	√	√	√
Shanghai Cooperation Organization	√	√	√	√	√	√
Economic Cooperation Organization	×	√	√	√	√	√
Non-Aligned movement	√	√	Observer	Observer	Observer	√

### 3. Cooperation in the economic field

Economic, trade and investment are one of the important areas of the India's and Pakistan's cooperation with Central Asian countries. In the 1990s, due to insufficient political ties and restrictions on the level of economic development, although India, Pakistan and Central Asian countries signed some economic cooperation agreements, memoranda, etc., but they did not achieve the expected results. Overall, the India's and Pakistan's economic relations with Central Asian countries in the 1990s showed the following characteristics: 1) many economic cooperation projects were stranded for various reasons; 2) the unidirectivity of economic cooperation was obvious. Some Indian and Pakistani companies and investors had entered Central Asian countries, but the activities in the opposite direction had basically not been. At the same time, India's and Pakistan's trade in Central Asia accounted for a small proportion of their total foreign trade, less than 1% [5]; 3) in order to solve the obstacles to economic and trade exchanges caused by geographical environment and traffic conditions, India and Pakistan had proposed a road interconnection plan with Central Asian countries. India advocated road interconnection in the direction of Iran and Turkmenistan, while Pakistan preferred to choose Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, but neither of them had not been implemented.

After entering the 21st century, India's and Pakistan's economic cooperation with Central Asian countries has developed, but the overall level is still low. Kazakhstan and Tajikistan are India and Pakistan's respectively largest trading partners in Central Asia, but in both sides the proportion of total foreign trade is very low. For example, the trade volume between Kazakhstan and India in 2016 was US \$ 618 million, which was more than the total trade volume between India and other countries in Central Asia in the same period [6]. Kazakhstan's foreign trade totaled 62 billion U.S. dollars that year [7, p.3], while India's foreign trade totaled \$ 623.59 billion [4]. This shows that Kazakhstan's trade with India accounted for only 1% of Kazakhstan's total foreign trade, and its share in India's total foreign trade was only one thousandth. The situation in other countries is roughly the same. But in general look, India's economic influence in Central Asia is higher than Pakistan, and this situation will become more apparent as

India and the Eurasian Economic Union start the construction of a free trade zone.

Energy cooperation is an important part of economic and trade exchanges between India, Pakistan and Central Asian countries. In this regard, India is even more keen to obtain oil and gas resources from Central Asia, and Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have naturally become India's main targets for cooperation. Keeping the average annual growth rate of the economy at 7-8%, India's energy demand needs to increase by about 5% each year [8]. This means that ensuring an uninterrupted energy supply is vital to India's economic vitality. However, about 70% of India's oil and gas are imported from the Persian Gulf [4]. As the situation in the Middle East has been in turmoil in recent years, reducing energy dependence on the Middle East and finding alternative energy sources has become an important part of India's national security and foreign policy. In view of the large amount of oil and gas resources stored in the Caspian Sea coast and offshore areas, where accounts for about the world 4% of natural gas reserves and 3% of oil reserves [9, p.3], Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan on the Caspian Sea have become India's main targets for energy cooperation. However, India and Central Asian countries face the problem of lack of transportation channels, so India has been working hard in recent years to promote the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline project, but has had little success. Pakistan has paid more attention to hydropower in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In recent years, Pakistan has been working hard to build a Central-South Asia electricity market (CASAREM), promoting the implementation of the CASA-1000 project [10]. Since the negotiations on CASA-1000 project began in 2006, due to various reasons such as Uzbekistan's opposition, the unstable situation in Afghanistan, and insufficient funds, no substantial progress has been made, which has caused at least US \$ 500 million in losses to the participating countries [11]. Today, the CASA-1000 project is still progressing slowly.

**Table 2.** Foreign trade situation of India, Pakistan and Central Asia in 2016

Total foreign trade \$ 62 billion		Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Uzbekistan
		\$ 5.4 billion	3.93 billion	\$ 24.3 billion	
India	\$ 623.59 billion	\$ 618 million	Less than \$ 300 million		\$ 366 million
Pakistan	\$ 65.57 billion	\$ 25.5 million	\$ 800,000 (2011)	\$ 55 million	\$ 3.9 million

In terms of investment, Pakistan's investment in the four Central Asian countries is very limited due to its national strength restrictions. Although India's national strength has grown rapidly in recent years, India has not invested much in Central Asia. Its investment has been concentrated mainly in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, but the unidirectivity is obvious. For example, from 2005 to 2017, India's direct investment in Kazakhstan was \$ 245 million, and Kazakhstan's direct investment in India was \$ 83 million [12]. Another feature of India's investment in Central Asia is to promote investment with key regional

projects. Since 2000, the Indian government has decided to propose a key regional project every year. For example, in the six years from 2007 to 2012, India proposed in Uzbekistan 6 key projects with a total investment of \$ 177.2 million.

#### 4. The influence of religion and religious organizations

Islam (mainly Sunni) is the largest religion in Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and the second largest religion in India. The influence of religions, especially religious organizations on India's and Pakistan's relations with Central Asian countries cannot be ignored.

**Table 3.** Number of Muslims in India, Pakistan and Central Asia

	India	Pakistan	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Uzbekistan
Total population (million)	1300	200	18	6.2	9.01	31.15
Muslim (million)	180	190	11.983	4.998	7.952	28.2
Proportion	14%	96.4%	66.6%	79.2%	88.3%	90.5%

Note: The total population of the four Central Asian countries in the table is the official data released by the four countries in January 2018, but the number of Muslims is data since 2013, so the proportion of Muslims in the total number is approximate.

In recent years, Islamic religious organizations in India have begun to strengthen their activities in Central Asia and have achieved success in Kyrgyzstan. One is "Ahmadiyya" (Ахмадийа), which was established in 1889 by Mirza Guriam Ahmed (1838-1908). Under the influence of Protestantism, he advocated the replacement of armed jihad with language jihad, that is, the peaceful way of spreading Islam through evangelism, and incorporating the elements of Hinduism, especially the image of Krsna, into it. After Ahmed's death, "Ahmadiyya" split into Qadian (named after the town in northern India) and Lahore ((named after the city in Pakistan) directions, of which Qadian is in a dominant position. The followers of "Ahmadiyya" managed to spread the movement around the world, but in Central Asia, "Ahmadiyya" is successful only in Kyrgyzstan. The second is "Tablighi Jama'at" (Джама'ат ат-Таблиг), which was founded in Mewat of India in the late 1920s by the Indian Sufis Mohammad Iliyaskandhalvi (1885-1944, Мухаммад Ильяс Кандеклеви). It advocates strict adherence to the provisions of Islamic law and pursues the awakening of Muslims worldwide with defining itself as a non-political organization, but its activities are limited to Muslim communities. In the 1960s and 1970s "Tablighi Jama'at" was introduced into Central Asia by India's students, where it has been developed after September 11, 2001, but mainly in Kyrgyzstan [13, pp. 5-17].

Sheikh Zulfiqar Ahmad Naqshbandi Mujaddi (шейх Мухаммад Зулфиқар

Накшбанди Муджаддиди, born in 1953 in Punjab, Pakistan), a supporter of the Naqshbandi sect from Lahore of Pakistan, has won a lot of popular support in Central Asia, especially in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Among his students, Salim Buhari (Салим Бухари), who has received modern secular higher education and obtained a degree in Germany, has had a certain impact on the development of the religious situation in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan [13, p.50].

## 5. Cooperation in Science, Technology and Education

**Table 4.** Status of QS Asian University Rankings for India's and Pakistan's universities in 2019

Ranking number	1-100th	101-200th	201-300th	301-400th	401-500th
India	8	11	20	21	16
Pakistan	2	6	2	5	8

Source: This table was compiled by the author based on QS official website: <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/asian-universityrankings/2019>.

India is the fourth largest information technology and communications powerhouse in the world after the United States, Japan and China. Its scientific research papers account for 3% of the world's publications, while chemistry (5.7%), pharmacology (4.3%) and physics (3.7%) has a proportion of more than 3%. In the QS Asia University Rankings 2019, a total of 76 colleges and universities in India entered the ranking with the highest ranking at 33rd place; a total of 33 colleges and universities in Pakistan entered the ranking with the highest ranking at 87th place. In other words, India's level of technological and educational development is significantly higher than that of Pakistan and Central Asian countries. Therefore, Central Asian countries are more inclined to carry out scientific, technological and educational cooperation with India based on their own needs. The following situations illustrate this point:

- 1) Since 1993, more than 1,000 Uzbekistan personnel in information technology, English, banking, small economy, management, agriculture and other fields have been trained in India, funded by the Indian Technical and Economic Assistance Project [14]. In 2004, according to the bilateral agreement between India and Uzbekistan, Tashkent University of Information Technology opened the Uzbekistan-India Information Technology Center.
- 2) On March 1, 2005, the "India-Central Asia" Foundation was established in New Delhi. Its purpose is to develop political, economic, national defense, and scientific cooperation between India and Central Asian countries, and to conduct research on new technological and cultural ties. Databases are created in India for scholars, entrepreneurs, technical experts and experts in other areas of knowledge from both sides.
- 3) The International School of Education of International University of Kyrgyzstan



has Central Asia-India Distance Education College, Kyrgyz-Pakistan Distance Education College, Kyrgyz-U.S. Distance Education Center. In 2017, Indian investors invested in Bishkek Academy of Finance and Economics and Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University have opened medical departments, medical laboratories and hemodialysis medical centers. In addition, there are about 3,000 Indian citizens in Kyrgyzstan, most of them are medical students (the tuition and living expenses in Kyrgyzstan are lower), while in India there are about 4000 Kyrgyz citizens [15].

- 4) The areas of scientific and technological cooperation jointly identified by India and Kazakhstan include new technology materials, biotechnology, catalytic technology, earth science, energy (bioenergy, solar energy, wind energy), informatics, mineral processing, petroleum refining, remote sensing, electronic communications and computer Science. Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and Jawaharlal Nehru University are the main partner universities for educational cooperation between these two countries. Ali Farabi University has the Indian section (belonging to the Faculty of Oriental Studies), Kazakhstan-India Information Technology Center, where has trained more than 50 experts who understand Hindi and Urdu and have experience of studying in Indian universities. The two countries subsidize more than 20 places for Kazakhstan university students to study in India every year. In addition, there is a large number of exchanges between the Military teaching section of Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University and India's National Cadet Corps.

In order to cope with the above situation and strengthen its own attractiveness and influence to the people of Central Asia, Pakistan has started to take action. The most important thing is that the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan has established a University of Central Asia and Pakistan (UCAP) in Islamabad to recruit students from Central Asian countries. The university costs Rs 2.84 billion (about US \$ 26 million), for which Pakistan has allocated Rs 600 million from the 2016-2017 fiscal year budget and Rs 500 million from the 2017-2018 financial year [16]. The Pakistani government's move aims to promote cultural exchanges, economic and social development, international peace and stability by providing high-quality education for students from Central Asia and turning Pakistan into an education center.

## 6. Conclusion

Through the analysis above, we believe that India and Pakistan have different interests and influence in various fields and different countries of Central Asia. This is reflected in the following aspects:

- 1) In terms of historical and cultural relations with Central Asia, India's inheritance is significantly higher than Pakistan. As far as specific countries are concerned, India has more historical and cultural links with Uzbekistan.
- 2) The current situation in maintaining regional stability is that India has more cooperation with Tajikistan, Pakistan and Kazakhstan are expanding military cooperation, and Pakistan has influence on Central Asian countries through

international organizations such as the Islamic Cooperation Organization and the Economic Cooperation Organization.

- 3) The India's and Pakistan's connections with four Central Asian countries in the economic field are weaker than in political and the level of economic and trade exchanges and investment between them is very low. India mainly trades with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and its investment is mainly concentrated in Kazakhstan. Pakistan mainly trades with Tajikistan and Kazakhstan. The India's and Pakistan's economic and trade cooperation with four Central Asian countries does not occupy an important position in each other's foreign trade. This means India and Pakistan have limited ability to influence Central Asian countries from an economic perspective.
- 4) Islam provides a certain basis for India and Pakistan to establish linkages with Central Asian countries, and the role of religions and religious organizations in the private contacts between India and Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is obvious.
- 5) Due to India's obvious advantages in the field of science, technology and education, India has significantly more exchanges with Central Asian countries than Pakistan, while Pakistan is still difficult to conduct scientific and technological exchanges and cooperation with Central Asian countries.
- 6) India, Pakistan and the four Central Asian countries face three common problems in their exchanges, namely road connectivity, anti-terrorism and extremism, and security and reconstruction in Afghanistan. However, there is a big difference between India and Pakistan in the choice of objects, ways and methods to solve these problems.
- 7) India and Pakistan's intentions to develop relations with Central Asian countries are not exactly the same, but they have a certain connection. As far as Central Asia is concerned, India uses the concept of "extended neighbour" and considers itself as a neighbor, even though it has no common borders with Central Asian countries. From a geographical point of view, this also makes sense, because Central Asia and Kashmir are only 20 kilometers away. India's intention is to obtain security, resources and geopolitics from Central Asia. This view is also confirmed in the Annual Report (2016-2017) of Ministry of Defence of India, which states that "India's interests in Central Asia are based on its geostrategic location, presence of abundant energy and natural resources as well as age-old historical and cultural ties. The region continues to be targeted by radical terrorist groups that seek to undermine the secular regimes. The International North South Trade Corridor which India, Iran and Russia are working to develop could enable viable trade and economic linkages with the region. India is also a stake holder in the TAPI pipeline as well as other initiatives such as digital links to foster connectivity" [17, p.5]. But to date, India and Central Asia are most closely linked on security issues. The development of Pakistan's relations with Central Asian countries is mainly based on two considerations: first, economic reasons, and second, strategic competition with India [18].

In general, neither India nor Pakistan has not invested heavily in Central Asia and has no particularly close partners. Although India has considered the impact of Central Asia as a back region of Pakistan in its strategy, it has not formed policies and its investments are far from sufficient to support this purpose. Therefore, it is not yet possible to say that Central Asia is an area where India and Pakistan strategically compete. India and Pakistan will not have serious disputes over the SCO's issues involving Central Asia. On the issue of Afghanistan's security and reconstruction, there can be a certain degree of cooperation between India and Pakistan with some disagreements. On other issues of the SCO, India and Pakistan will have different impacts on different countries in Central Asia, but this impact will not be very significant.

We believe that it should not be preconceived that India will stand on Russia's side on all SCO's issues and Pakistan will stand on China's side. This view presupposes that China-Russia relations are competitive within the SCO and ignores the comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Russia. It is wrong to presuppose a "sub-alliance", similar to Russia-India or China-Pakistan, within the SCO, which is not conducive to the development of the SCO. The China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership is the cornerstone of SCO, which should not be shaken. Joining of India and Pakistan in the SCO should be considered more from a positive perspective and the expansion of the members should become an active factor for SCO to play a greater role in the international community.

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