



US-China Strategic Competition in South Asia: Implications for Regional Power Dynamics

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Abstract

The close competition between the US and China in South Asia has greatly changed how the region deals with politics, business and defense. As China and the US strive for dominance through defense cooperation, infrastructure development initiatives, diplomatic engagements, military and political means, smaller countries in South Asia make sure not to depend too much on either of the two. The study examines the rising conflict between the US and China in South Asia and its effects on the region's peace, independence and cooperative activities with other nations. Examining Pakistan, India and Bangladesh as main examples, the study shows how people at the local level interact with superpower plans which can result in imbalances of power and new partnerships. Researchers also examine whether adversarial or cooperative outcomes may arise in the Indo-Pacific, China's BRI and the Quad. According to the analysis, while regional tensions rise because of intense great power competition, South Asian nations have a chance to use economic and strategic opportunities but could remain vulnerable if they depend too much. At the end, the study suggests ways to decrease conflict escalation and encourage mutual cooperation in the region.

Introduction

The rise of China as an economic and military power and its growing influence in South Asia has increased US concerns, posing the greatest challenge for US interests and hegemony in the region. (Goh, 2005). After the demise of the USSR, the US needed a new strategic partner other than Pakistan to counter the potential challenges from China to safeguard its interests in the region (Zaheer et al., 2023). India's marvelous economic growth was the best option which attracted the attention of the US policymakers. For the US, India was the only choice that was capable of creating balance of power to counter China's growing influence in the region (Ross, 2006).

Importance of South Asia as a strategic region

South Asia holds immense global significance due to its strategic location, large population of over 2 billion people, and rapidly growing economies, making it a hub for market potential and investment opportunities (Ghani & Ahmed, 2009). Comprising eight nations, the region has become a focal point for international stability, given its challenges with terrorism and unresolved territorial conflicts. Since the collapse of the USSR, South Asia has gained immense geopolitical importance, with the US seeking to expand its influence in the region. This has led to rising tensions with China, which also aims to strengthen its presence. Both global powers are competing for dominance through infrastructure development, military alliances, and diplomatic efforts, turning South Asia into a strategic battleground. Because the US and China rely on trade through the region and it holds many natural resources, the area's importance in the world has grown (Ramasamy et al., 2017). China views

South Asia as a prime region for growing its economy, mainly through BRI initiatives, among which the CPEC stands out as connecting China to the Arabian Sea and surrounding India. The government in Beijing is working on building closer military and trade relations with Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka and is helping to build the Gwadar and Hambantota ports which allow China to increase its energy supplies and naval bases in this region.

At the same time, the US considers South Asia important to its Indo-Pacific strategy and sees India as a major check on China's power. Through alliances like the Quad and defense partnerships, Washington aims to enhance regional security while offering alternatives to China's BRI. Pakistan remains significant for counterterrorism cooperation, and the US prioritizes safeguarding key sea lanes in the Indian Ocean to maintain its naval dominance. This geopolitical rivalry continues to shape South Asia's political and economic landscape, making it a crucial theatre for global power competition.

US INTERESTS IN SOUTH ASIA

Advancement of Democracy

The US policymakers encourage democratic culture in South Asia to counter critical threats like Terrorism, Nuclear Proliferation, Nuclear War, Civil War and Islamic Radicalism (Cohen, 2005). The US thinks that democracy is the best option to tackle the top-tier security challenges and it has been backing democratic governments in South Asia in one way or the other (Jalal, 1995).

Human Rights

The US has always been raising its voice for Human Rights in South Asia, particularly against China which is considered the rival force of the US in the region (Mauzy, 1997). The US looks dissatisfied with the condition of Human Rights in South Asia, particularly in China. The United States constantly treats South Asia as precarious, pressurizing Pakistan, China and India over its concerns, while frequently raising warnings. Favorable Balance of Power in South Asia. After the demise of USSR, the US has been taking measures to counter China's economic and military influence in the region (Mearsheimer, 2010). In this regard, the US shows keen interests to have strategic partnership with India and Pakistan. Looking at the stunning economic development and good civil military relations in India, the US considers it the best competitor of China in the region. The USA's willingness to provide India with financial aid and strategic weapons is a clear indication how it is interested to counter China in South Asia.

Economic Interests

The US has various economic interests in South Asia driven by the strategic location, rapidly growing economies including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and potential trade markets for the US goods and services. South Asian countries offer significant opportunities for the US businesses to invest in technology, manufacturing, agriculture, energy, infrastructure and energy resources, including Oil, natural gas, and renewable energy. South Asia is located along major sea lines of communication, making it important for international trade (Sen, 2014).

US Shift of Strategic Focus in South Asia

The US continues the conventional security policy towards South Asia as it was during the Cold War Era (Jia, 2017). As the international dynamics have changed, an inclusive and coordinated strategy has become the need of the hour. The US has several vital interests in the region (Nichol et al., 2006). The significance of South Asia has become undeniable especially after the emergence of China as an economic and military power which poses a direct threat to the US security and hegemony in the region. Beijing's mounting influence has forced the US to revisit its policy towards South Asia, prompting a reevaluation of the US-India relations and the Quad alliance. China's increasing influence has become the prime concern for the US policy (Sutter, 2006). A significant shift in US

policy toward South Asia has been observed, with the US reinforcing cooperation with India and declaring it a priority 'India First' as an emerging economic power. (Vijayalakshmi, 2017).

Diplomatic Engagements:

The aim of the US diplomatic engagements in South Asia is to advance its interests in the region, promote regional stability and prosperity which can help to create a favorable balance of power against the increasing influence of China (Saunders, 2013). The US is promoting bilateral and as well as multilateral relations with the South Asian states. At present China's growing influence in South Asia is the greatest challenge for the US on the diplomatic front. The USA's diplomatic engagements with India and Pakistan are meant for creating a favorable balance in the region.

Financial Support

The US is providing financial support to its allies in South Asia in various fields like military aid especially to India to enhance its defense capabilities, as it can be the best competitor of China in the region. The US is spending substantial funds in regional security cooperation, offering allies economic assistance comprising loans, grants, and technical assistance to promote healthcare, education, infrastructure, and stability.

Advancement of Human Rights

Another key component of the US strategy to maintain influence in the region is the advancement of human rights. The US deals with South Asia through diplomatic dialogues, human rights advocacy, civil society support, sanctions, and democracy promotion, using public diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral talks, and private diplomacy to increase awareness. Occasionally, the US takes coercive measures against states transgressing international human rights laws. In doing so, critics argue the US leverages human rights promotion to foster its strategic interests in the region.

US Policy of "India First"

Though the US has not officially proclaimed an 'India First' policy, its diplomatic efforts comprising bilateral agreements, increased military and financial assistance, and civil nuclear cooperation reveal a clear strategic preference for India. This term emerged in January 2022 which indicates the US policy towards India. India's rise as a priority partner, replacing Pakistan, indicates a drastic swing in US foreign policy toward South Asia. (Dutt, 2009). The US and India have become strategic partners against the increasing influence of China in the region. The US has increased its financial, military and economic aid to India over the past few years. The US has facilitated India to build strong people-to-people ties with the US. India appears to be the best option for the US to counter China.

Military Ties

To counter China's potential aggressive action in South Asian Region, the US is strengthening the defense capabilities of its allies in the region. US military support to South Asian states comprises technology partnerships, arms sales, and nuclear energy agreements. The US pursues to establish a credible minimum deterrence to counterbalance the mounting influence of China in the region. Especially various military, economic and atomic technology deals with India are purely to create favorable balance of power in the region. The US strategies are mostly conventional and somehow contradictory to the present demands. The US still relies on the traditional carrot-and-stick policy to security, which has proven ineffectual in today's developing security landscape."

The Quad

The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) generally called the QUAD, established in 2007, is an alliance comprising four countries the US, India, Japan, and Australia, pursues to counter China's increasing influence in South Asia (Jie, 2019). Its main focus is on strategic cooperation, joint military exercises, and promoting shared values of democracy and free trade.

CHINA'S INTERESTS IN SOUTH ASIA

Geo-Political Aspirations

China shares borders with five countries in South Asia: India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bhutan, making China the key player in the region (Malik, 2001). Potentially, India appears to be the only competitor of China in the region which has compelled the US to adopt "India centric" policy. The primary objective of the US is to prevent the emergence of a powerful Asian competitor that can mitigate its hegemony in the region. It has also border disputes with India and Bhutan which cause security issues. Its strategic alliance with Pakistan is significant for shaping the South Asian security. China, to increase its influence and to bolster security objectives in the region, provides economic and military assistance to Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Gwadar, a deep water seaport, near the Strait of Hormuz will serve as naval base in the Indian Ocean, allowing China to keep an eye on India and the US operations (McCartney, 2022).

Economics & Trade

China is the second largest economy in the world, rapidly making economic integration with the South Asian countries to enhance its influence in the region (Chandra et al., 2010). It needs raw materials and energy for sustainable economic development, which fuels China's growing involvement in the region. With rapidly growing trade between China and India, China now ranks as India's second-biggest trade partner after the United States. China also enjoys strong trade relations with Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Maldives, and Bhutan. Being the key source of foreign direct investment in South Asia, China is investing huge amounts in various infrastructure development projects. The market of South Asia has great potential for Chinese investments and trade (Brunjes et al., 2013).

Security

Security in South Asia is one of the greatest Chinese concerns in the region (Javaid, 2016). China shares its borders with Five South Asian countries (Tripathi et al., 2020). It has border disputes with India and Bhutan. Although China is the second largest trade partner of India, cross-border issues pose serious threats, which can escalate tensions at any time, potentially leading to conflicts. A peaceful South Asia is the goal of China to safeguard its interests in the region (Kumar, 2019). India and the US pose great challenge for China's security as they have made many bilateral agreements in security, atomic technology and various other domains. Their collaboration is a constant threat to China's growing influence in the region. China's economic integration with the regional countries is linked with security (Youkang, 2001). China pursues to maintain the Communist Party's political monopoly, protect territorial integrity (land, sea, air), defend maritime rights, ensure national unity, and promote regional stability while averting armed conflicts.

Geopolitical Influence & Regional Hegemony:

China and India, two major powers of South Asia, the largest economies and military powers, are striving for hegemony in the region (Scott, 2008). The US is backing India to counter Chinese increasing influence in the region. China aims to establish itself as the dominant regional power and wants to exert influence over regional political, economic, and security dynamics aiming to secure its interests and to reduce the influence of other powers, particularly India and the US. China's economic integration in South Asia has strengthened its position to some extent against its rival forces in the region (Vaughn et al., 2006). Its economic ties with the regional actors and military aid to its allies is seen as an expansion of its influence in South Asia. China's increasing interests and activities are an indicator that it wants hegemony in the region driving the US out of South Asia, diminishing India's economic and military power.

China's Strategies in South Asia to Protect its Interests

The String of Pearls and Naval and Military Bases

China is building the String of Pearls, a network of strategic ports across the Indian Ocean to protect political and economic interests, enhance regional influence, and counter US presence, eventually aiming for dominance or reduced American hegemony in the region. The term “String of Pearls” refers to China’s network of military and commercial facilities and relationships along the sea lines of communication, which extend from China to the Horn of Africa. The main purpose of the String of Pearls is to protect China’s maritime trade routes to secure its energy imports and to project its power in the region (Ashraf, 2017). The ports making up the network are Gwadar Port in Pakistan, Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, Chittagong Port in Bangladesh and Kyaukpyu Port in Myanmar. One of the major aims of the String of Pearls is to surround India to secure energy routes for China and enhance its sway in the region. China set up a military base in Djibouti, close to Bab-ul-Mandeb, the vital connection between the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean. China has also increased its involvement in maritime security activities and naval drills in the region.

The Belt & Road Initiative is also known as BRI

Launched in 2013, BRI was inaugurated by China to strengthen cooperation and ties between Asia, Europe and Africa (Zhang, 2018). With the BRI, China can challenge the United States by boosting its local economics, getting more political advantages and creating strategic partnerships in Asia. The project encompasses infrastructure development initiatives, Ports and maritime infrastructure, energy projects, attracting business investments, promoting trade and, the Digital Silk Road (Kireeva, 2019). The BRI aims to challenge American influence by creating fellow Asian countries’ economic dependencies, growing Chinese military activity in the region and linking Asian regions to make an economic bloc.

Development and improvement in economic matters

Investing in Southeast Asia in economies and infrastructure projects is a key strategy China uses to reduce the US’ influence in the region (Chung, 2018). China’s BRI and similar strategies in South Asia are part of its effort to increase its sway internationally and to enhance relations with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal. China is providing financial loans and aid to its allies in the region to strengthen their economic and military power. Another aspect of Chinese investments in energy, manufacturing, and technology sector is to foster economic development by creating dependencies on China which can potentially help to enhance its influence in the region. Through economic integration, China is creating a network of economic dependencies that brings the regional states closer to China (Munakata, 2007). Through infrastructure development China seeks to safeguard natural resources and potentially support dual-use (civil-military) strategies to counter US hegemony in the region.

Military & Security Co-operation

Enhancing military and security cooperation with South Asian countries is a part of China’s strategy to counter the US influence in the region (Wuthnow, 2018). China is strengthening its allies in the region through strategic partnerships, naval ports, arms supply and technology transfer, military diplomacy, joint exercises and diplomatic engagements. It is also employing soft power through cultural exchanges, educational programs, and military training. It is obvious that China’s strategy in South Asia is a comprehensive combination of economic, military, and diplomatic efforts to counter the US for securing its interests.

Diplomatic Engagements

China’s diplomatic approach to counter the US in South Asia revolves around economic integration, political alliances, multilateral engagements, and soft power initiatives. China is making efforts to reinforce its bilateral relations with South Asian states through mutual benefits to counterbalance the US (Malik, 2001). Through economic diplomacy, China is investing in infrastructure projects like Ports, railways and energy sector across South Asia, positioning itself as a major trade partner for regional countries principally Pakistan and Bangladesh. China is actively playing its role to promote regional organizations like SCO and SAARC to limit the US influence in the region (Renard, 2013).

It offers diplomatic support and mediation to the regional countries to resolve their internal and regional disputes. It has played an important role in facilitating Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the US and has always supported Myanmar diplomatically and financially. On Kashmir issue, China has always supported Pakistan's stance on international forums especially in Security Council. In return, China wins the support of Pakistan on Taiwan issue (Faruqui, 2001).

Comparative Analysis

Primary concern of both great powers in South Asia, particularly in the Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific is maritime security (Ghosh, 2004). The Indian Ocean and Asia Pacific are the two major trade routes and energy supply lines (Cheema, 2012). That's why China has developed naval ports across the region to safeguard the trade routes. The trade routes are equally important for China and as well as the US. So, in response to China's increasing influence, the US has engaged itself to enhance its presence through its major ally India, to protect its own trade benefits. On the diplomatic front, both the countries are striving to strengthen their alliances with the South Asian states. China, through diplomatic and economic integration, is expanding its influence, offering substantial trade opportunities and investments in infrastructure development programs in countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar. Its trade volume with South Asian countries especially with Bangladesh and India highlights its significant economic presence in the region. On the other hand, the US is also increasing its efforts to foster closer ties with India, as a strategic partner capable of counter-balancing China in the region (Liu et al., 2021). The US has made several strategic, economic and political agreements with India. The US is also providing economic aid to India, aiming to empower it to compete with China and to create a balance of power in the region.

Both the US and China are busy to enhance their military presence in the region to protect their interests (Cabestan, 2021). China is building and upgrading naval bases and increasing the number of military to secure its interests while the US is responding in the same way by enhancing its military cooperation with its most trustworthy ally India and other regional partners to counter China. Both the powers are striving for hegemony in the region. This clash of interests revolves around gaining regional dominance. The US pursues to maintain its influence through India, an emerging economic and military power. While China is advancing its influence through economic integration and diplomatic approach. The present US-China rivalry reflects the comprehensive geopolitical competition between the two global powers, each striving to establish or preserve its dominance in the region.

KEY AREAS OF CLASH OF INTERESTS

The US-China escalating rivalry in South Asia has emerged as one of the defining geopolitical dynamics of the present century (Rashid, 2022). This complex competition covers economic, military and strategic areas, manifesting itself in diverse arenas worldwide. Here are the major areas of clash of interests between the two:

US-China Economic Security

Historically, the US has been the leading economic power, but the speedy economic growth of China, has challenged this dominance, leading to trade conflicts, accusation of unfair trade practices, and imposition of tariffs, intensifying tensions which gave birth to economic competition between them. Both the countries exercise significant economic influence and pursue to secure access to international markets, resources and strategic infrastructure. China and the US have deeply intertwined economies (Huang, 2017). The United States is the largest export market for China while China is the largest import market for the US (Morrison, 2019). China earns more than \$500 billion from annual export to the US, more than \$100 billion in foreign direct investment, and joint projects in high-tech industries (Salidjanova, 2011). On the other hand, the US depends on China for economic growth in major industrial sectors. Estimates show that decoupling the two economies could cost the US aviation industry up to 875 billion dollars by 2038, the semiconductor industry up to 159 billion dollars and more than one hundred thousand jobs, the medical industry more than 479 billion dollars

over the next decade and the other industries more than 479 billion dollars. These deeply intertwined economies of the two major powers have significant implications for the world. The trade conflict arose when in July 2018, the Trump administration imposed 25% tariffs on Chinese goods (Bown, 2019). In response to China's retaliation, the conflict continued. However, Trump administration's tariffs failed largely and burdened the US economy.

US-China Power Struggle within Multilateral Institutions

The effects of the US-China economic rivalry are extended to multilateral institutions like WTO and IMF (Li & M, 2011). Both the governments have used the platforms of these organizations and have bitterly criticized each other for trade practices. The United States influences the institutions significantly in formal and informal ways. The US funding, pressure, and criticism influences the World Bank's programs significantly and has de facto power in World Bank. China always shows its reservations on the World Bank's international development programs and has adopted different strategies to address these concerns (Talero et al., 1995). It has expressed frustration with its limited governance authority within these institutions. Despite a potential future economic power, China has limited decision-making power in the world institutions like the World Bank and IMF. The China-US economic competition affects the trade flow, supply chains, investments, and technological advancements not only in South Asia but also across the globe (Gur et al., 2023). It is creating uncertainty for businesses, can disrupt regional and global trade, and can pose challenges for those countries which are economically connected with either of the two great powers.

Strategic Rivalry and Geopolitical Dominance

The US and China are struggling for geopolitical influence in South Asia, which is another crucial side of their competition (Shambaugh, 2018). Both are striving for the expansion of their influence by making partnerships with the regional players to dominate the region. This rivalry is particularly significant in the region, where Pakistan plays an important role in geopolitical sphere. Pakistan and the US have long sustained close relationships since the Cold War era, driven by security, counterterrorism, and strategic interests. China has always been Pakistan's all weather friend (Chaudhuri, 2018). During the past few years, it has enhanced its engagements with Pakistan through CPEC, and several other infrastructure development projects, extending its presence in the region. China holds more economic power in South Asia than the US, whereas the US defense network is significantly stronger than that of China.

Military and Security Competition.

The Military competition is another crucial area of clash of interests between the two global powers in the region. The race for dominance in South Asia has compelled both the countries to adopt more suitable and effective strategies to expand their influence. Both world powers are engaged in an escalating rivalry which spans various domains, comprising military, naval, space, cyberspace, and emerging technologies. This competition is driven by the conflicts in the South China Sea, and Taiwan, both of which remain volatile sources of clashes. The strong military presence of the US in the region is intended for defending Taiwan's sovereignty (Rahman, 2001). The US is the biggest weapons supplier to Taiwan against China (Kan, 2006). This behavior of the US has provoked China to take solid measures against the US presence in the region, as China does not recognize Taiwan as an independent state. China's emerging military and economic power has made it the greatest strategic competitor of the US. The US is striving to contain China's growing influence in the region.

Implications for Regional Power Dynamics in South Asia

The strong rivalry between the United States and China in South Asia is bringing big changes to how regional powers interact, form alliances and work together economically. Each of the two great powers strives to shape the policies of key South Asian countries including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, making the region a geopolitical battleground. Countries need to weigh their business gains against the strategic problems they may encounter.

The US is working to expand its Quad alliances and increase military partnerships with countries in South Asia to counter China's rising power anchored by the Belt and Road Initiative. Because of this great-power struggle, established alliances are collapsing, tough security pressures are rising and economics and institutions are increasing their differences in South Asia.

Regional Power Shifts:

Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bangladesh are working to have close ties with big international powers to achieve both economic growth and security. India is fortifying its links with the US in QUAD and Indo-Pacific groups and at the same time is economically involved with China through BRICS and SCO forums. Thanks to CPEC and more joint military exercises, Pakistan and China now enjoy a stronger relationship which has reduced Islamabad's dependence on the US. It is still difficult for Pakistan to find balance in its relations with the world's major powers.

China's policy of Economic Integration

China is steadily increasing its political role in South Asia by investing more in the region's economy, using infrastructure projects such as CPEC and creating more naval bases despite worries about how its debts in the region can be managed. At the same time, the United States is challenging Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative by introducing alternative remarks such as the Blue Dot Network and the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment which is likely setting the scene for a stronger rivalry over development among the countries nearby.

Security Dynamics and Defense strategies

Agreements and exercises between the United States and India are increasing India's ability to oppose China, leading to growing tension between them mainly due to border disputes. At the same time, China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean at Gwadar, Djibouti and Sri Lankan ports creates big challenges for US and Indian interests. The tense standoff between the US and China is contributing to an arms buildup in the region, where Pakistan, with the help of China in enhancing its defense power and India is striving to strengthen its military power with the help of the US. This squabble intensifies regional instability, accelerating competition between the two great powers.

Regional Institutions and Diplomatic engagements

Because SAARC has become weak due to constant India-Pakistan tensions, China has found more opportunities to promote the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and exercise greater control in the region. Because of this, the Quad which has US support hopes to provide a counterweight to China's rise. Still, while India is fully behind the Quad, most other South Asian nations do not want to follow India in this regard, so they stay cautious. As a result, the regional countries must try to get the most of China's growing influence, while also developing strong ties with Washington and its Asia-Pacific coalition.

Internal Political Fragmentation

Due to disagreements among Nepal, the Maldives and Bangladesh on aligning with the US or China, their foreign policies are swinging back and forth. Washington and Beijing are focusing their soft power competition in the region by using media, educational programs and development funds, hoping to change how people, leaders and groups think. Therefore, choosing strategies within the region becomes more difficult, since regional countries must handle competing influence from the US and China.

Conclusion

The importance of South Asia to world politics, its wealth potential and security factors have put it at the center of competition between the US and China. Regional threats of terrorism and undefined border disputes have not stopped the region from acting as a major pathway for trading and energy flows. Once the Cold War ended, the US ran multiple South Asia initiatives to support its role as a major world power (Beeson, 2004). Trying to control the region, Washington focused on making its

presence stronger there. While China was emerging as a top global power, it saw US influence in South Asia with suspicion and tried to reduce its influence. Beijing has increased its influence by carrying out major infrastructure projects, including the BRI and the CPEC. In addition, China is building key sea ports along its coasts known as the “String of Pearls” to guard important routes in the Indian Ocean, block partnership between the United States and India and ensure its oil and gas supplies stay safe. The United States is expanding its role in the region by joining the Quad and growing closer to India so they can both address China’s rising power (Shahzad et al., 2022). The actions have made the US and China compete more fiercely for influence in South Asia. China is working to stop regional power from shifting in favor of the United States. Because the US and China are becoming more competitive globally, small nations now must pay careful attention to managing their ties with both. Both the United States and China are changing the political situation in South Asia through different economic, military and diplomatic maneuvers (Shambaugh, 2018). By means of the Belt and Road Initiative, China runs ahead, but the U.S. remains active by improving India’s part and promoting various development frameworks in response.

In South Asia, the outcomes are both favorable and unfavorable. While the competition may help bring in new economic prospects and improvements, it also makes security problems more severe in a dangerous region. Maintaining this situation means talking to both the U.S. and China in a careful manner to ensure we are not heavily involved in their conflicts. It is important for the region to manage major powers’ rivalry, without losing stability and economic gains at home. To progress sustainably, South Asia must work together, welcoming all countries, so it can benefit from the world’s opportunities and address the risks of political tensions.

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