



Saudi-Pakistani Relations in a Strategic Transforming World



Wednesday, 19 September 2018



special reading 37

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan visit to Saudi Arabia is one of the most important event not only in the Asian context, but also in all of world. That makes following the dimensions of this visit a starting point to read the trends of strategic shifts in the global policy in general, and the regional environment of both countries through a set of commonalities, both on the level of the features of both, or the challenges directed by the two sides.

A Deep history of diplomatic relations

The relations between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have been rich in cooperative and positive positions, expressed by reciprocal visits to the various levels of leaders of the two countries. This relations dates back to 1974, when the Kingdom supported Pakistan's independence from India and concluded a cooperation agreement between the two countries in 1951, Brotherhood between the two countries and not to use the land of the two countries to harm the other state.



Saudi-Pakistan relations take the pattern of a strategic alliance historically linked to security issues.

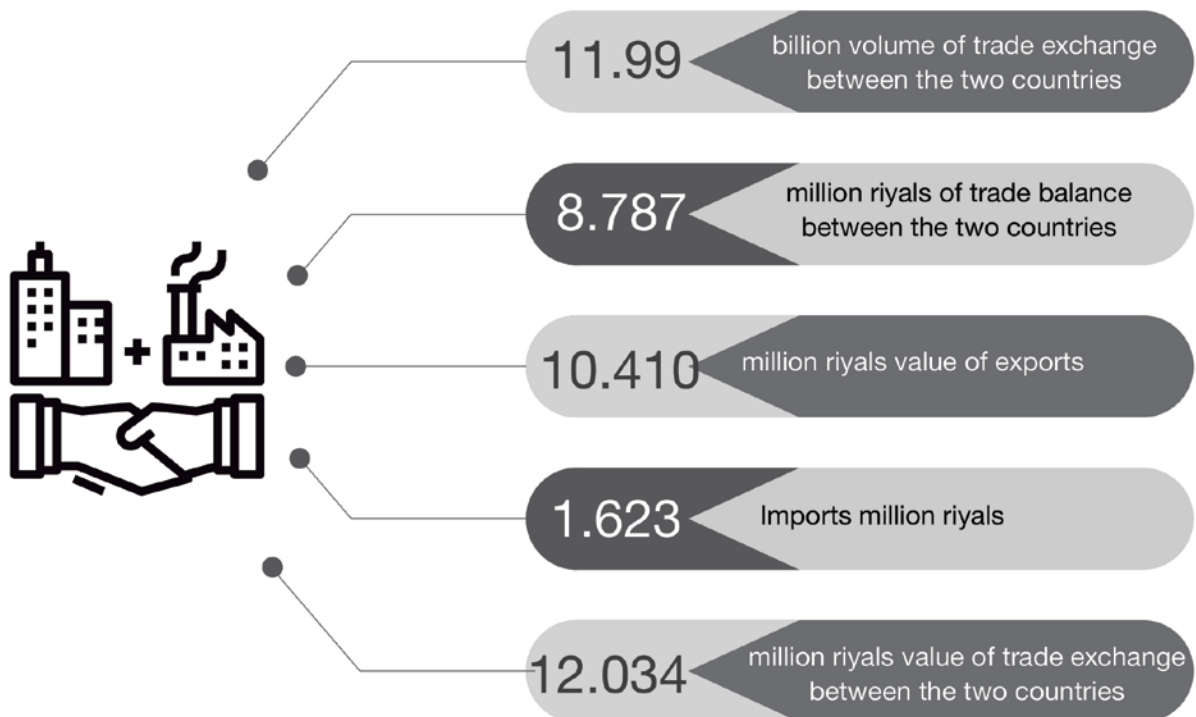


This rapprochement strengthened the visit of King Saud to Pakistan in 1954, where he visited a number of Pakistani cities such as Peshawar and Lahore, and received an honorary doctorate in law from the University of Karachi. King Fahd also visited Pakistan in 2003 following the US invasion of Iraq.

Pakistan has historically supported Saudi Arabia's efforts to establish the Organization of the Islamic Conference and has been an active member to date. Accordingly, relations between the two sides developed and was expressed by the visit of King Salman bin Abdulaziz when he was crown prince in 2014, during this visit a meeting was held with Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussein and senior officials. Prince Mohammed bin Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, Crown Prince, Prime Minister and former Minister of Interior, he also received Pakistani Army Commander Rachel Sharif to discuss ways to enhance the security aspects of Saudi-Pakistani relations. Prince Mohammad bin Salman also visited Pakistan, during which he met Pakistani Prime Minister and Pakistani Army Commander. Hence; the level of mutual visits between the two sides necessarily reflects a common understanding of the size and the necessity of Saudi-Pakistani relations. Economic aspects of the visit

As part of an Asian tour by King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz in 2003, the scope of the Saudi-Pakistani relations, which included the visit of Pakistan, focused primarily on enhancing the economic aspects by opening the door to the inflow of Saudi investments, especially in the Pakistani steel sector. \$ 130 million by Al-Tuwairqi, which acquired 75% of Pakistan Steel Manufacturing Company for \$ 362 million. When Pakistan moved to privatize major companies, Saudi Al-Jomaih Company was led by Karachi Electricity Generating Company. Li 68% of Crescent Commercial Bank in exchange for \$ 98 million.

Economic cooperation between KSA and Pakistan



Main exported commodities



Metal products worth SR 6.885 million



Plastics and articles thereof amounting to SR 1.965 million



Chemical and organic products: 721 million riyals

Imported commodities



Grain worth 270 million riyals



Clothes worth 205 million riyals



The economic relations between the two countries have reached an advanced stage. The Kingdom is one of the top 10 exporters of Pakistan. The volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached 18 billion riyals in 2013, but reached about 115.5 billion Riyals), the trade balance is in favor of the Kingdom is 91%. Pakistan's economy also benefits from about \$ 7 billion in Saudi Arabia, the income of 2 million Pakistanis working in the kingdom. In addition, the flow of remittances to Pakistan in 2013 is about \$ 5.9 billion.

In this context, Saudi Arabia is one of the pillars of Imran Khan's strategy in the face of the deteriorating situation in the Pakistani economy, which may prompt the new government of the International Monetary Fund assistance. The credit rating agency Fitch recently announced that the Central Bank of Pakistan was forced to use foreign currency reserves in the country and reduce the national currency to cope with the growing trade deficit, although Pakistan's gross domestic product improved by 5.8% in 2018 but the public debt is estimated at about 70% And reserves of foreign currency fell from \$ 16.1 billion in April to \$ 9.6 billion in June this year, and the budget deficit stands at 6 percent.

In the face of these deteriorating economic conditions, Imran Khan hopes that Saudi Arabia will provide him with financial support, which may divert him from resorting to the International Monetary Fund.



Iran's behavior in support of regional chaos and instability encourages Iran and Pakistan to strengthen Saudi-Pakistani relations.



The strategic context of the Saudi-Pakistani relations

The structure of power balance in the global system is witnessing a remarkable change in recent times as China moves towards adopting the economic project called the "China-Pakistan Economic Axis", which gains Islamabad a strategic position distinguished by its geostrategic position. The latest developments extend to Russia's efforts to join the economic corridor in its attempts to regain its former status as a superpower.

Saudi-Pakistan relations are influenced by the strategic shifts in Saudi foreign policy and the re-establishment of the reins in various domains. After a period of strategic relaxation in Saudi Arabia's policy toward South Asia, Riyadh seeks

to re-establish relations with one of its traditional Asian allies in Islamabad, Only in the world.

In this context USA puts pressure on Pakistan, such situation was expressed by President Donald Trump who described Pakistan as “lies and deception” and then decided to cut \$ 255 million of military funding, which was met by Islamabad strongly refused to end its alliance with Washington. In contrast to the hard-line US stance on Islamabad, China has announced its support for Pakistan as “a great effort in the fight against terrorism, and the international community should recognize it.”

On the Saudi side, the Kingdom is reading the transformations taking place in the Middle East as part of a wider system of global strategic shifts that should be dealt with in accordance with new developments.



With regional security in the Persian Gulf region and the Middle East in general exposed to a wide range of security threats, Riyadh seeks to diversify its foreign alliances and break the Western monopoly of global strategic control, especially as the global balance of power shifts to the Asian side. In this context, besides the Saudi alliances with the world powers, they have historically relied on the eastern and western pillars. Pakistan is the western wing through which the series of global strategic shifts can be traced. Strategic stability in the face of regional challenges, both those coming from Iranian ambitions to destabilize the Middle East, or even arising from the crises of the Middle East, which made the region a swamp of the forces of terrorism around the world.

The Saudi and Pakistani directions are in line with the threat of Iranian threats to regional security, whether in the Middle East or in the Asian Ocean, which is influenced by Pakistan, which represents 15% of the population; it also has borders with Iran, in addition to Shiite minority in Pakistan, as happened in 1987, where the Iranian ambassador to Pakistan announced his country's ability to mobilize a million Shiites in the streets of Pakistan within hours.

Security aspects of the visit

The Saudi-Pakistani relations are the pattern of a strategic alliance historically linked to security issues. Security cooperation between the two countries has begun with Pakistan's contribution to the establishment of the Saudi armed forces. The areas of security cooperation between the two sides to include training areas where there are about 1200 Pakistani trainers in various security and military sectors in the Kingdom.



The security environment and a troubled strategy surrounding both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, which requires the two sides to restore the priorities of foreign relations.



Moreover, the security relations between the two sides are strengthened by the similarity of the religious faith of the Saudi and Pakistani armies, as well as geographical similarity, which in turn facilitates cooperation in the face of terrorism, security and intelligence exchanges.

So, the importance of this event stems not only from Khan's first foreign visits since he took office, but also from the dimensions of the visit and its importance.

It comes after a history of relations strengthened by the Saudi role in building Pakistan's nuclear program, The only nuclear state in the Islamic world. Saudi Arabia's new president recognizes the importance of strengthening relations between the two sides. Hours after the swearing-in, Khan received Saudi Information Minister Awad bin Saleh al-Awad, where they reviewed the reality of bilateral relations between the two countries.

The year 2016 witnessed a number of meetings followed by Pakistan's reaffirmation of its commitment to preserve the security and sovereignty of Saudi Arabia, which is not new in light of the historic strategic relations between the two countries in light of the chaos in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia recently announced a \$ 180 million financial aid package to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which was followed by the announcement that 135 Pakistani security officers were regularly assisting their Saudi counterparts in security matters . After a meeting between the Saudi ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed al-Mali and the Pakistani army chief, the latter announced that he would send troops to Saudi Arabia in a "training and consultation mission"



under a second security cooperation agreement between the two countries since 1982, The Iranian reaction, as it shares borders with Iran, as well as the fear of parliament from the reflection on the internal situation, especially with the presence of 15% of Pakistanis embrace the Shiite religion, but that did not prevent the presence of between 750 to 800 Pakistani troops in the Kingdom in advisory missions and help in the protection of the holy places.



The crisis in the Pakistani economy and the strategic changes taking place in South Asia are pushing the Pakistani president to rely on Saudi support in the face of previous challenges.



Conclusion

Based on the previous analysis, one concludes the following;

- The Pakistani prime minister's visit comes amidst a security environment and a turbulent strategy that surrounds both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, forcing the two sides to re-prioritize their foreign relations.
- The cooperative approaches and strategic rapprochement between the two countries may support the data sets that drive these trends.
- Problems
- The economic crisis, and the strategic changes taking place in South Asia, as well as the violence in Pakistan recently, all this prompts the Pakistani President to rely on Saudi support in the face of the previous challenges.
- Saudi Arabia, for its part, is well aware of the shifts in world power balances and the importance of Pakistan in these transformations, especially with the role played by Islamabad with China in a global economic axis, which makes the Kingdom keen to take advantage of these new trends in world politics.
- Iran's behavior in support of the chaos and instability in the regional environment of both countries, both in the Middle East and Asia, is a catalyst for both sides to promote Saudi-Pakistan relations.



Reference

- 1 - Omar Farouk, Pakistan's political future in the balance , <http://cutt.us/F8uNz>
- 2 - Ahmed Zaman, Saudi-Pakistan relations to where <http://cutt.us/ZgOpt>
- 3 - Dr. Hassan Mossadegh, Arab-Pakistani relations towards a constructive strategy governed by caution , <http://cutt.us/vaJVA>
- 4 - Abdul Rahman Rizk, Pakistani military units to Saudi Arabia in advisory missions , <http://cutt.us/TZD7p>
- 5 - Major challenges facing the Pakistani economy .. «narrow window» of government action , <http://cutt.us/1nN2N>
- 6 - The next Pakistani government will face serious economic challenges , <http://cutt.us/bWK7H>
- 7 - Fitch: Turkey will face slower growth in the economy in the coming period , <http://cutt.us/qrNbs>
- 8 - Pakistan sends troops to Saudi Arabia , <http://cutt.us/YPY65>
- 9 - Saudi Arabia calls on Pakistan to intensify security cooperation in the context of storm Hazm,<http://cutt.us/jL6Uq>



What We Do

