

# MP-IDSA Issue Brief

# Turkiye-Pakistan Defence Cooperation: Evolving Dynamics

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February 09, 2024



Turkiye and Pakistan are deepening their robust defence partnership, marked by defence trade, collaborative research, co-production, technology transfer, institutional engagements, joint exercises, training, and a focus on security and counter-terrorism.

#### Introduction

Turkiye and Pakistan share a longstanding and robust defence relationship that has deepened over decades. Historically, Pakistan and Turkiye were a part of the US-led Baghdad Pact, and its subsequent avatar, the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). Both Turkiye and Pakistan have faced arms embargoes and restrictions from Western suppliers like the US and Europe for various reasons. This has driven the two countries to forge closer strategic ties and increase indigenous production capabilities to reduce dependence on external suppliers. From joint ventures in defence tech and co-production of equipment to joint training and exercises, Turkiye and Pakistan aim to support each other in developing self-sufficiency in arms manufacturing.

# **Defence Trade Partnership**

#### F-16 Modernisation Programme

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) received delivery of the final four upgraded F-16 Fighting Falcon jets in September 2014 from Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) in Ankara, marking the completion of Pakistan's F-16 modernisation programme. As per the contract awarded by Pakistan's Ministry of Defence in October 2009 worth US\$ 75 million, TAI carried out avionics and structural upgrades on a total of 41 PAF F-16s to extend their operational life and enhance capabilities. The contract also included pilot training on the upgraded aircraft.

Electronic Warfare Test and Training Range

The PAF inducted the Electronic Warfare Test and Training Range (EWT&TR) in January 2011. The over US\$ 20 million contract was awarded to Turkish defence company HAVELSAN to design and establish the EW range for the PAF.<sup>4</sup>

Pakistan Navy Fleet Tanker Project

As prime contractor, the Turkish firm STM signed a contract worth US\$ 80 million with Pakistan Navy in January 2013 to design and build a fleet tanker. STM provided the ship design, equipment, systems and material to construct the ship at the Karachi Shipyard. The logistics vessel, launched in 2016 and named PNS MOAWIN,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "TAI Completes Upgraded F-16 Deliveries to Pakistan Air Force", Airforce Technology, 3 September 2014.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Türkiye Has an Opportunity to Establish JVs in Pakistan and Make Use of the Low-Cost Labor Available in Pakistan", Defence Turkey, December 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> "TAI Completes Upgraded F-16 Deliveries to Pakistan Air Force", no. 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> "Türkiye Has an Opportunity to Establish JVs in Pakistan and Make Use of the Low-Cost Labor Available in Pakistan", no. 2.

was delivered to the Pakistan Navy in 2018 after sea trials.<sup>5</sup> Pakistan Navy commissioned the 17,000-tonne fleet tanker "capable of performing a variety of maritime operations including the provision of logistic support to other ships at sea by transferring fuel and other important military cargo".<sup>6</sup>

#### Upgrading of Agosta 90-B Submarines

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in 2016 worth US\$ 350 million for the mid-life upgrade of three Agosta 90-B submarines of the Pakistan Navy. The task of upgrading these submarines was undertaken by the Turkish firm STM.<sup>7</sup> STM delivered the first submarine PNS/M HAMZA (S-139) to the Pakistan Naval Forces Command in April 2021 and the second submarine PNS/M KHALID (S-137) in January 2023.<sup>8</sup> According to STM, the modernisation programme for the submarines has involved comprehensive upgrades to critical systems including sonar, periscopes, command and control, data distribution, steering control, cooling and radar. The upgrades utilised advanced technologies developed domestically by Turkish companies such as ASELSAN and HAVELSAN and certain systems have also been exported as part of the project.<sup>9</sup>

### ASELPOD Electro-Optical Targeting System

Turkish firm ASELSAN signed an initial contract worth US\$ 25 million with Pakistan in June 2016 to supply 16 ASELPOD targeting pods. In May 2017, ASELSAN signed a second contract worth US\$ 24.9 million with Pakistan for 16 more pods. ASELSAN provided technical support to enable successful integration and firing tests of the pods on Pakistan Air Force's JF-17 combat aircraft in 2017. 10

#### Super Mushshak Aircraft

In October 2022, the Turkish Ministry of Defence confirmed receiving the delivery of three Super Mushshak aircraft from Pakistan, marking their inclusion in the inventory of the Air Force Command at Yalova Airport Command. The project, initiated under the Initial Trainer Aircraft Project, was formalised through an agreement in 2017. Delay in delivery ensued due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to the current plan of delivering a total of 52 aircraft to the Turkish Air Force over a two-year period.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> "Pakistan Navy Fleet Tanker Project: PNS MOAWIN", Savunma Teknolojileri Mühendislik (STM).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> "Navy Commissions Indigenously Built 17,000-tonne Fleet Tanker", Dawn, 16 October 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Mateen Haider, "Turkey to Buy Super Mushshak Trainers from Pakistan", Dawn, 15 July 2016.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> "STM Delivers Second Submarine in Pakistan Navy Agosta 90B Project", STM, 25 January 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> "Aselsan Signs a New Export Contract for AselPOD", Defence Turkey, August 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Tayfun Ozberk, "Deliveries of Super Mushshak Trainer Aircraft to Turkish Air Force Commence", Shephard Press Limited, 11 November 2022.

#### MILGEM corvettes

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in January 2022 boasted that Turkiye was among the ten countries globally possessing the indigenous capabilities to design, build and maintain warships. <sup>12</sup> In July 2018, the Pakistan Navy formalised an agreement worth US\$ 1.5 billion <sup>13</sup> to procure four MILGEM corvettes from the Turkish state-owned defence contractor Military Factory and Shipyard Management Corporation (ASFAT). <sup>14</sup> The contract involves the construction of two corvettes in Turkiye and an additional two at Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works (KS&EW).

Notably, the agreement includes provisions for the transfer of design rights and construction know-how from Turkiye to Pakistan, <sup>15</sup> emphasising a collaborative effort in naval capabilities. According to the official spokesperson of the Pakistan Navy, the proposed ships will serve as technologically most advanced platforms for the Pakistan Navy and will "contribute in maintaining peace and balance of power in Indian Ocean Region". <sup>16</sup>

On 23 September 2023, ASFAT formally delivered the inaugural Babur-class corvette (PN MILGEM), PNS Babur (280), to the Pakistan Navy at the Istanbul Naval Shipyard. Turkiye's Defence Minister Yaşar Güler highlighted the historic significance of the Turkish defence industry by emphasising the simultaneous construction of four corvettes for Pakistan under the Turkish national warship initiative—MİLGEM. Signifying the strengthening of relations between Turkiye and Pakistan, Guler stated that "our defense industry projects are one of the most important pillars of our cooperation". With regard to Pakistan's participation in MILGEM, he also highlighted that

"with this project, which demonstrates the superior level reached by the Turkish defense industry, the strategic cooperation between our countries has become even stronger, and the successful completion of the project will lead to new business opportunities." <sup>18</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Aysu Bicer, "Turkiye Among 10 Countries Able to Design, Build, Maintain Warships Nationally: President", Anadolu Agency, 14 January 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Ibrahim Sunnetci, "A Look At PN MILGEM/JINNAH Program", Defence Turkey, 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Aamir Latif, "Turkey-Pakistan Joint Military Exercise Begins", Anadolu Agency, 9 February 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Tayfun Ozberk, "Istanbul Naval Shipyard Launches MILGEM Corvette 'PNS KHAIBAR' For Pakistan Navy", Naval News, 25 November 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> "Welding Ceremony of 3rd ship of MILGEM Class Corvettes", Director General Public Relations (Navy), Government of Pakistan, 24 January 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Tayfun Ozberk, "Turkiye Delivers Corvette to Pakistan, Launches 2 OPVs For Turkish Navy", Naval News, 24 September 2023.

<sup>18 &</sup>quot;Türkiye Launches Two Naval Patrol Ships in Istanbul", Hürriyet Daily News, 25 September 2023.

#### T129 ATAK Helicopters

In July 2018, Turkiye and Pakistan concluded a defence agreement involving the sale of 30 Turkish T129 Tactical Reconnaissance and Attack Helicopters (ATAK) to be made by Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI), with an estimated value of around US\$ 1.5 billion, a significant milestone in their defence collaboration. The helicopters were supposed to be delivered over a span of five years. <sup>19</sup> However, the United States has hindered the export clearance for the LHTEC engines, preventing the delivery of the ATAK T-129 helicopters. Turkiye's then-presidential spokesman, Ibrahim Kalin, stated that the blockage might lead Islamabad to seek helicopters from China instead. The US restrictions are linked to broader sanctions imposed on Turkiye for its procurement of S-400 missiles from Russia. <sup>20</sup>

#### Bayraktar TB-2 Armed UAV

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)'s Trade Register, Pakistan ordered three Bayraktar TB-2 armed UAV from Turkiye in 2021 and received them in 2022.<sup>21</sup> While there is limited information available in the public domain about the specifics of Turkiye's drone sales to Pakistan, few media reports have confirmed the drone sale.<sup>22</sup>

#### **UAV** Upgradation

Turkish Aerospace Industries (TUSAS) and Pakistan's National Engineering and Science Commission (NESCOM) signed an agreement for the production of components integral to an extended-endurance drone developed by Ankara. The agreement was formalised during the International Defence Industry Fair in Istanbul in August 2021 and will focus on advancing the capabilities of the Anka unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). Developed by TUSAS, the Anka drone is designed for surveillance and attack missions, with the capacity to carry up to 200 kg of sensors or weaponry, including lightweight air-to-surface missiles.<sup>23</sup>

#### *R&D* in *Drone Technology*

Pakistan's National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP), inaugurated in August 2023, has entered into a collaboration agreement with the Turkish drone manufacturer Baykar for research and development (R&D). The agreement has paved the way for Baykar to conduct R&D studies within NASTP, laying the foundation for

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> "Turkish Attack Helicopter Deal with Pakistan Worth Around \$1.5 Billion: Sources", Reuters, 13 July 2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Anwar Iqbal, "US Blocks Delivery of Turkish Gunships to Pakistan", Dawn, 10 March 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> "Arms Trade Register", Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Yusuf Cetiner, "Pakistan Acquires Bayraktar TB2 and Akıncı Drones From Turkey", Overt Defense, 14 March 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> "Turkey, Pakistan Sign Deal to Enhance Drones", Turkish Defence News, 24 August 2021.

extensive future cooperation. Baykar aims to deepen its collaboration with Pakistan in strategic areas through this partnership. The agreement was formalised at the opening ceremony attended by Baykar Chairman of the Board, Selçuk Bayraktar, and Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.<sup>24</sup>

#### KAAN National Combat Aircraft Programme

In August 2023, Turkiye's Minister of National Defence Yaşar Güler stated that the agreement for Pakistan's involvement in the KAAN National Combat Aircraft Programme is on the verge of being signed. In response to the denial of access of the F-35 under Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) to Turkiye, Güler emphasised that this setback motivated Turkiye to pursue the development of its own aircraft, specifically the KAAN. He acknowledged the supportive efforts from friendly and brotherly countries, including Azerbaijan, which has already signed an agreement and Pakistan's participation was also being finalised.<sup>25</sup>

As per SIPRI, Turkiye's arms exports increased 69 per cent from 2018 to 2022 compared to 2013–2017.<sup>26</sup> Turkiye's share of global arms exports rose 0.5 per cent to 1.1 per cent in this period, indicating an upward trajectory in its defence trade. Qatar, the UAE and Oman accounted for 50 per cent of Turkiye's exports.<sup>27</sup> Pakistan remains a strategic defence ally for Turkiye, but does not rank among the top three leading importers of Turkish armaments till 2022.

#### **Institutional Mechanisms**

#### High Level Strategic Cooperation Council

Turkiye and Pakistan established an institutionalised mechanism known as High Level Cooperation Council in 2009, which has been upgraded to the High Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC).<sup>28</sup> The sixth meeting of the HLSCC took place in Islamabad during the visit of President Erdoğan to Pakistan in February 2020. It culminated in the signing of 13 documents, including the Strategic Economic Framework and HLSCC Joint Declaration.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> "Türkiye's Political Relations with Pakistan", Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Turkiye.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> "Pakistan Aerospace Park, Turkish Drone-maker Baykar Sign Cooperation Agreement", Defense Mirror, 5 August 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> "Minister Güler: An Agreement is About to be Signed with Pakistan for KAAN", SavunmaSanayiST, 13 August 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> "Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2022", SIPRI, March 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ibid.

As per the HLSCC Joint Declaration, both States have agreed to intensify and expand security and defence collaboration. It includes mutually sourcing defence purchases to the maximum feasible extent, with a priority on collaborative research, development and production initiatives. Furthermore, the enhancement of collaboration among law enforcement institutions was also envisioned, encompassing training activities and the exchange of best practices, information, experiences and expertise. Moreover, cooperative endeavours through relevant counter-terrorism institutions were proposed to formulate effective methods and avenues of collaboration, particularly addressing the evolving threats in cyberterrorism and cybercrime. It was also decided to establish a Joint Working Group on Defence Industry.<sup>30</sup>

#### High-Level Military Dialogue Group

The military cooperation forum between Turkiye and Pakistan originated post-9/11 during NATO intervention in Afghanistan. Turkiye's mediation efforts, resulting in the Ankara Declaration, solidified the collaboration, with a shared focus on regional stability and the fight against terrorism.<sup>31</sup> In 1988, a collaborative Military Consultative Group (MCG) was formed.<sup>32</sup> Over time, this entity transitioned into a more advanced High-Level Military Dialogue Group (HLMDG) in 2003. HLMDG serves as the highest level of institutional mechanism between Pakistan and Turkiye, with the mandate to formulate policies and action plans aimed at enhancing collaboration, specifically in the defence sector.<sup>33</sup>

In a historic move, Pakistan and Turkiye signed a defence cooperation agreement in October 2015 during the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the HLMDG in Ankara, wherein Turkiye committed to providing Pakistan with 34 T-37 fighter-cum-trainer aircraft and their spare parts on a gratis basis.<sup>34</sup> The 15<sup>th</sup> round of HLMDG took place in Turkiye in December 2020, where both countries agreed to enhance defence cooperation, mainly focusing on aspects of security and counter-terrorism. Pakistan delegation visited various Turkish defence firms, including Baykar (UAV OEM), ASELSAN, HAVELSAN and Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> "Pak-Turkey Agree to Strengthen Cooperation", PKRevenue, 15 February 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Asad Ullah Khan, "<u>The Expanding Turkey-Pakistan Military Cooperation</u>", Center for Iranian Studies (IRAM), 4 January 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Zaki Khalid, "Analysing Pak-Turk Joint Naval Exercises 'Turgutreis' (I-V)", Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research, 24 November 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> Dilara Hamit, "<u>Turkey, Pakistan to Strengthen Defense Cooperation</u>", Anadolu Agency, 24 December 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Mateen Haider, "<u>Turkey to Provide 34 T-37 Aircraft to Pakistan Free of Cost</u>", Dawn, 28 October 2015.

<sup>35</sup> Dilara Hamit, "Turkey, Pakistan to Strengthen Defense Cooperation", Anadolu Agency, 24 December 2020.

The 16<sup>th</sup> round of the Pakistan–Turkiye HLMDG was held in the Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, from 4 to 7 January 2022. Both sides discussed various common areas of interest, including security, counter-terrorism and the handling of the regional environment. The meetings delved into defence cooperation aspects such as training, exchange visits and the co-production of defence equipment.<sup>36</sup>

## **Military Exercises**

#### ATATURK/JINNAH

Joint military exercise Ataturk/Jinnah began in 1998, with each country organising the exercise on their home territory in alternate years.<sup>37</sup> The ATATURK-XII 2023 joint military exercise, spanning two weeks, concluded in February 2023 at Tarbela in the Swabi district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.<sup>38</sup> Turkish Special Forces and Pakistan's Special Service Group (SSG) participated in it. The presence of high-ranking officials from Pakistan and Turkiye underscored the significance and mutual commitment to enhance military cooperation and counter-terrorism efforts between the two nations.

#### Air Force Exercise 'Anatolian Eagle'

Anatolian Eagle is the air force exercise conducted and hosted by the Turkish Air Force inspired by the US Red Flag and Maple Flag Series. The first Anatolian Eagle Exercise was conducted in 2001 in Turkiye and has continued with increasing participation from many countries. The table below specifies exercises where Pakistan participated along with Turkiye.

Training Exercise	Timeline	Participants
AE-04/3	27 September – 08 October 2004	Turkiye, USA, Israel, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Pakistan
AE-06/2	12–22 June 2006	Turkiye, USA, Pakistan, France, NATO
AE-07/2	11–22 June 2007	Turkiye, USA, Jordan, Pakistan, NATO, UK
AE-08/4	03–14 November 2008	Turkiye, Pakistan

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> "16th Round of Pakistan - Turkey High Level Military Dialogue Group", Press Information Department, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, 6 January 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> "ATATÜRK-XII EXERCISE", Press Release, Land Forces Command, Ministry of National Defence, Republic of Turkiye, 7 January 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Aamir Latif, "<u>Türkiye-Pakistan Joint Military Exercise Concludes</u>", Anadolu Agency, 9 February 2023.

AE-09/4	02–13 November 2009	Turkiye, Pakistan
AE-11/2	13–24 June 2011	Turkiye, USA, UAE, Jordan, Pakistan, NATO, Italy, Spain, Saudi Arabia
AE-12/2	11–22 June 2012	Turkiye, UAE, Jordan, Pakistan, Italy, Saudi Arabia
TUSAP	01–12 September 2014	Turkiye, Pakistan, NATO
AE-15/1	08–19 June 2015	Turkiye, USA, Pakistan, NATO, Germany, England, Spain,
AE-16/1	30 May – 10 June 2016	Turkiye, Pakistan, NATO, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Netherlands
AE-19/2	17–28 June 2019	Turkiye, USA, Jordan, Pakistan, NATO, Italy, Qatar
AE-21/2	21 June – 02 July 2021	Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Qatar, NATO
AE-22/2	20 June – 01 July 2022	Pakistan, Jordan, Azerbaijan, UK, NATO

Source: Adapted from Anatolian Eagle Official Website.

In the 2022 edition of the exercise held from 20 June to 1 July, several nations participated, showcasing a collaborative effort in Composite Air Operations (COMAOs). The participating countries included Pakistan, Azerbaijan, the UK, Jordan and NATO. The exercise involved 48 aircraft and 1,335 personnel, who conducted a total of 274 sorties.39 Such exercises not only demonstrate the interoperability of diverse air forces but also showcases a collaborative approach to addressing a spectrum of operational challenges in contemporary air warfare.

#### **Naval Exercise TURGUTREIS**

Exercise Turgutreis holds a unique distinction as the sole joint naval exercise between Pakistan and Turkiye conducted in two distinct oceans, namely the Indian Ocean (specifically the North Arabian Sea) and the Atlantic Ocean (specifically the Mediterranean Sea). 40 The first edition of the exercise was held in April 2018 in the North Arabian Sea. In the most recent engagement, Turkish Navy ship TCG BURGAZADA visited Karachi on 29 December 2022, engaging in the bilateral Exercise TURGUTREIS-VII with the Pakistan Navy. The bilateral exercise aimed at enhancing interoperability featured joint patrolling in the North Arabian Sea,

<sup>39</sup> David Cenciotti, "In Pictures: Anatolian Eagle 2022 at Konya Air Base", The Aviationist, 28 July 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Zaki Khalid, "Analysing Pak-Turk Joint Naval Exercises 'Turgutreis' (I-V)", Centre for Strategic and Contemporary Research, 24 November 2020.

encompassing defence against asymmetric attacks, Visit Board Search & Seizure (VBSS), Air Defence Exercises and Joint Coordinated Patrol.<sup>41</sup>

Besides this, Turkiye also regularly participates in the Pakistan-led AMAN exercise. The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of the AMAN series, AMAN 2023, took place at the Pakistan Navy Dockyard in Karachi in February 2023. It was attended by senior military officials from 51 participating navies, foreign diplomats and Pakistan Navy personnel.<sup>42</sup>

#### **Trilateral Defence Collaboration**

Turkiye, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia commenced Trilateral Defence Collaboration, holding engagements in Riyadh in August 2023 and Rawalpindi in January 2024. The trio aims to synergise defence technologies through joint R&D and pooling intellectual, technical, financial and human resources. They emphasised augmenting cooperation to achieve self-sufficiency in defence and accelerate efforts towards shared goals. The next meeting has been proposed to be held during the World Defence Show in Saudi Arabia in February 2024.<sup>43</sup> The engagement demonstrates strategic alignment among the three countries to boost indigenous defence capabilities.

# **Counter-Terrorism Cooperation**

Since the signing of a bilateral agreement in March 2001, 1,494 Pakistani military personnel have received education in Turkiye till 2017.<sup>44</sup> Notably, 116 attended the Turkish Armed Forces Partnership for Peace Training Center, 138 studied at the Centre of Excellence for Defence Against Terrorism (COE-DAT) in Ankara, and three were enrolled at the Turkish War Colleges Command. In reciprocal exchanges, 51 Pakistani personnel served in Turkiye, while 125 Turkish military personnel participated in educational programmes in Pakistan.<sup>45</sup>

Pakistan strongly condemned the 2016 attempted coup in Turkiye and expressed steadfast support for the elected government. In 2018, Pakistan's Supreme Court directed the government to designate Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO), implicated in the coup attempt, as a terrorist organisation and close schools affiliated

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> "Turkish Navy Conducts Naval Drills with Pakistan Navy", Pakistan Navy, Government of Pakistan, 29 December 2022.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> "8th Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-2023 & PIMEC Kicks Off at Karachi", Defence Turkey, 11 February 2023.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> **"2nd Meeting of Pakistan, KSA and Turkiye Trilateral Defence Collaboration Was Held at GHQ"**, PR-8/2024, ISPR, 9 January 2024.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Sinan Uslu, "<u>Turkey Trains Hundreds of Pakistani Military Personnel</u>", Anadolu Agency, 25 May 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

to that organisation. The Court also ordered FETO assets be transferred to Turkish Maarif Foundation.

Ankara accuses FETO, led by Fetullah Gulen, of infiltrating institutions to overthrow the state.46 In 2019, Pakistan's Supreme Court rejected a final appeal by FETO against the 2018 ruling. Pakistan revoked permissions for FETO-linked Pak-Turk schools and handed over 28 institutions to Maarif Foundation.<sup>47</sup> The actions demonstrate Pakistan's commitment to counter terror groups threatening Turkiye's stability. Pakistan's firm stance against FETO reinforces counterterrorism cooperation and the strategic partnership between the two countries.

#### Conclusion

The defence partnership between Turkiye and Pakistan has deepened in recent years through institutional mechanisms like the HLSCC and HLMDG and increasing joint exercises. Major defence deals with technology transfer provisions have bolstered Pakistan's capabilities. Trilateral cooperation involving Saudi Arabia further expands engagement in defence industries. On counterterrorism, Pakistan's stance against FETO after the 2016 coup attempt shows solidarity with Turkiye. Going forward, while respective national challenges necessitate closer defence ties, economic constraints in both countries could pose challenges. Shared security interests and Turkiye's growing indigenous capabilities however will likely see their strategic defence cooperation persist on an upward trajectory.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> Aamir Latif, "Overview of Unconditional Turkey-Pakistan Relations", Anadolu Agency, 3 January 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> Islamuddin Sajid, "Pakistan's Top Court Rejects FETO Review Petition", Anadolu Agency, 16 April 2019.

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