**Pakistan outlines Foreign Policy regional and international approach**

Its people have seen war, turmoil and conflict for too long. They deserve peace, security and normal lives."

"Pakistan believes in an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned [peace process](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Peace%20process). We have made sincere efforts in this regard to bring all stakeholders to the negotiating table."

He said Pakistan had hosted over three million Afghan refugees for more than thirty years. Pakistan would continue to support [Afghanistan](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Afghanistan) in its pursuit of peace and reconciliation, as well as reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts.

[Sartaj Aziz](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Sartaj%20Aziz) said the Middle East was in a state of flux and turmoil continued in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen. "We believe there is a dire need to ensure that the region is not destabilized by terrorist groups."

"We also welcome the initiation of dialogue process in Kuwait between both parties in Yemen and hope that it would lead to a negotiated settlement to the crisis," he added.

Advisor on Foreign Affairs said Pakistan believed in the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iraq. "We commend Iraqi government's efforts in the fight against Daesh," he added.

About the issue of Palestine, he said, "While there is no end in sight to the long ordeal of Palestinians, Pakistan is disappointed over the current stalemate in the [peace process](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Peace%20process). The deadlock has implications for peace in the region and beyond."

"We believe that unless the Palestinian issue is resolved, peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved. We call for the establishment of an independent homeland for Palestinians with [Al-Quads Al-Sharif](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Al-Quads%20Al-Sharif) as its capital. We support the quest of the state of Palestine for membership in the United Nations," he added.

On South China Sea, [Sartaj Aziz](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Sartaj%20Aziz) said,"Pakistan feels that disputes should be resolved peacefully by directly concerned sovereign states through consultation and negotiations in accordance with relevant [bilateral agreements](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/bilateral%20agreements) and the Declaration on Conduct of Parties."

"The countries outside the region should fully respect the efforts by China and [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) countries to maintain peace and stability in South China Sea and play a constructive role."

[Sartaj Aziz](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Sartaj%20Aziz) said Pakistan enjoyed long association with the [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) countries. "We are a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) since 1993."

"Our economic and political relations with [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) member states and with [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) itself have enhanced over the years. We believe that time is ripe to upgrade this relationship to Full Dialogue Partnership to further strengthen Pakistan's ties with [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) in political, economic, security and social fields," he added.

The Advisor said Pakistan's positive and active contribution to regional and international organizations was well established and acknowledged by the [international community](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/International%20Community).

"I hope that [ASEAN](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/ASEAN) would recognize this potential and accept Pakistan as its Full Dialogue Partner soon," he added.

[Sartaj Aziz](https://timesofislamabad.com/tag/Sartaj%20Aziz) appreciated the warm welcome and elaborate arrangements made by the government of Lao People's Democratic Republic for the 23rd ARF Ministerial Meeting.