

Is Pakistan Switching Sides?

Description

via ASB Military News

Pakistan's new PM was widely expected to take a pro-American stance and step away from pro-Russian political ties, however, that did not happen. Here's his address to Putin:

“Your Excellency President Putin.

It is really a great honour and a pleasure to call on you along with my colleagues, the Foreign Minister, Defence Minister and Finance Minister. My brother, Nawaz Sharif, sends you his very warm regards. I brought good wishes for you and the people of your great country, Russia, from Pakistan. The people of Pakistan convey their very good wishes to you.

President Putin, thank you for your condolences message. We have had devastating floods because of unprecedented torrential rains in Pakistan, which have hurt the entire country: 33 million people have been affected, 1,400 have died, and hundreds of children have died. Millions of acres of crops – rice, cotton, sugar cane – all gone. Millions of houses have been damaged, partially or completely. The Foreign Minister's province of Sindh has been most devastated, as well as Balochistan, and then other parts of Pakistan. Thank you for your support. We have received your valuable support at this critical time. We are very grateful to you.

I just want to let you know that my fond memories with your great country go back to 1968–1969, when I was a student. That was my first trip to any international country. So, I went to Moscow – my father sent me for business training. I met companies like Stankoimport and Mashinexport – they had their office at Dom 35, Moscow. That is my memory with your great country.

At that time, we had barter trade between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. The first steel plant was built by the Soviet Union in Karachi. His grandfather, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, laid the foundation stone. We had tremendous partnership – that is the kind of relationship Pakistan had with your great country. It is on its own, it does not need any support, it is inclusive and it is not at the cost of any other country.

Your Excellency, we want to build our relations with your great country with full commitment and full dedication, because you are a superpower. Pakistan stands to gain from this mutual cooperation, mutual understanding, promoting trade, investment, and other areas like gas pipelines. We had signed a protocol in 2016–2017 that needed to be implemented. Unfortunately, for some reason, it could not be, but I know the potential your great country has, from which Pakistan must benefit in our own interest.

I have come here with my delegation with this proposal for your kind consideration, Mr President. We need to further cement our relations. We need to further build our relations in the field of energy, in the field of trade, in the field of investment and of course other strategic areas.

You are a man of action. You decide, and then you implement. I want to assure you that I want to work closely with you for our mutual [benefit].” – Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif

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