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Perspectives On the Issues Shaping Policy

The Badr Accord: Enhancing Pakistan's Peace and Security

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The Badr Accord, signed in Doha on October 21, 2026 by Pakistan, Türkiye, Qatar and Indonesia, offers an opportunity to strengthen Pakistan's national security through defense-industrial cooperation, technological self-reliance and strategic partnerships. Its significance lies in moving beyond conventional arms purchases towards a collaborative system in which participating countries pool their expertise, resources and manufacturing capabilities.

Pakistan faces a complex security environment, including tensions on its eastern and western borders, terrorism, technological competition and the economic costs of maintaining credible deterrence. The challenge is to strengthen national defense without triggering an unsustainable arms race. The Badr Accord could help Pakistan achieve this balance, provided its commitments translate into practical projects.

From Arms Purchases to Joint Production

The four participating countries bring complementary capabilities. Pakistan has experience in aircraft production and defense manufacturing. Türkiye has developed a substantial defense industry, particularly in unmanned systems, electronics and sensors. Qatar can contribute financial resources and procurement capacity, while Indonesia offers experience in maritime defense, shipbuilding and access to a substantial

Southeast Asian market. These are potential areas of complementarity rather than a confirmed division of responsibilities under the accord.

For Pakistan, the advantage would include sharing the costs and risks of research, development and production. Joint ventures could facilitate technology transfer, strengthen domestic manufacturing and reduce dependence on foreign suppliers. However, the agreements publicly reported framework does not itself establish specific production programs or guarantee access to the other members' military capabilities.

Strengthening Conventional Deterrence

Pakistan's security depends not merely on the size of its armed forces but on their ability to detect threats, respond rapidly and maintain operational readiness. The Badr Accord could support this objective through cooperation in radar, surveillance, electronic warfare, counter-drone technology and military communications. Joint production of spare parts and selected equipment could improve maintenance and reduce the risk of supply disruptions during a crisis.

Common technical standards, specialized training and military exercises could also improve interoperability among participating forces.

These developments would strengthen Pakistan's capacity to deter aggression by

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making its armed forces more resilient and responsive. Nevertheless, the accord does not automatically provide Pakistan with new air-defense systems, intelligence-sharing arrangements or guaranteed military assistance. Such benefits would require separate agreements and practical implementation.

Reducing Dependence on External Suppliers

One of Pakistan's longstanding defense challenges is uncertainty surrounding international arms supplies. Even after purchasing sophisticated equipment, a country remains dependent on spare parts, ammunition, software, upgrades and technical support.

Joint production could help Pakistan gain greater control over these critical dependencies. For example, a project might combine Pakistani manufacturing with Turkish engineering, while Qatari investment helps finance production and Indonesian demand supports economies of scale. Such cooperation could provide three benefits: greater strategic autonomy, lower lifecycle costs and improved resilience during international supply disruptions.

However, joint production does not automatically mean technological independence. The partners may remain dependent on third-country engines, semiconductors, and software or export licenses. Pakistan should therefore negotiate meaningful technology transfer, intellectual-property rights and guaranteed access to critical components.

Economic Benefits and Defense Exports

The accord could strengthen Pakistan's economic security, which is inseparable from national defense. Joint ventures may create skilled employment, improve engineering capabilities and generate foreign exchange through defense exports.

Potential areas include aircraft components, avionics, unmanned aerial systems, counter-drone equipment, military communications, naval technologies and technical support services.

The stated ambition to meet the requirements of friendly and allied countries could expand opportunities beyond the four signatories. However, announcements alone do not guarantee export orders or financial returns. Projects must be commercially viable, competitively priced and supported by transparent procurement arrangements.

Pakistan should ensure that domestic universities, research institutions and private manufacturers participate meaningfully. Defense cooperation should develop local expertise rather than merely assemble imported components.

A Wider Strategic Partnership

The Badr Accord connects South Asia, the Middle East and Southeast Asia, giving Pakistan an opportunity to diversify its strategic relationships.

Türkiye is an established defense-industrial partner, Qatar is an important Gulf partner, and Indonesia provides access to Southeast Asian markets and security networks. Their cooperation could extend into maritime security, disaster response, military medicine, peacekeeping and counterterrorism, where interests overlap.

Nevertheless, the four countries have different geographic priorities and international relationships. The accord should therefore be understood as a framework for defense-industrial cooperation, not necessarily as the foundation of a unified military bloc. Its strength may lie in flexible, issue-based partnerships rather than an obligation to support every member in every conflict.

Badr and the Makkah Joint Defense Agreement

The distinction between the Badr Memorandum of Understanding and the Makkah Joint Defense Agreement among Pakistan, Türkiye and Saudi Arabia is important.

Badr focuses primarily on defense production, research, training and technological cooperation. The Makkah arrangement, as publicly reported, concerns

mutual defense commitments and closer strategic and military cooperation.

The two arrangements could complement each other. Badr might help participating countries develop equipment and capabilities, while separate agreements determine when and how military assistance is provided.

However, the publicly reported Badr terms do not establish an automatic collective-defense obligation for Qatar and Indonesia. Pakistan must avoid confusing industrial cooperation with a commitment to participate in military operations.

This distinction matters amid regional tensions. Defense partnerships should expand Pakistan's options, not automatically draw it into conflicts in which its direct national interests are not at stake.

Can Badr Contribute to Peace?

Defense cooperation can support peace when it strengthens deterrence, reduces vulnerability to coercion and creates incentives for countries to maintain stable relationships.

Yet an exclusive military grouping could intensify regional rivalries if other states perceive it as directed against them. Pakistan should present the accord as an instrument of defensive preparedness and technological cooperation, not confrontation.

Responsible arms-export controls, end-use monitoring and adherence to international obligations will also be essential. Defense production must complement diplomacy, confidence-building and regional dialogue rather than undermine them.

What Pakistan Should Do Next

The real test begins after the signing ceremony. Pakistan should identify a limited

number of commercially viable projects that address its most pressing security needs, particularly surveillance, counter-drone systems, defense electronics and equipment maintenance.

It should negotiate clear provisions for technology transfer, local production, intellectual property, and training and export rights. Universities and private manufacturers should be included, while implementation should be assessed against measurable milestones, budgets and delivery schedules.

The government must also clarify the accord's institutional arrangements, funding mechanisms and implementation timetable.

Conclusion

The Badr Accord could become a useful component of Pakistan's long-term security strategy. Its greatest value would lie not simply in access to additional weapons but in a more resilient defense-industrial base, stronger technological capabilities, dependable supply chains and a broader network of strategic partners.

Three conditions will determine its success: Meaningful technology transfer, economically sustainable joint projects and a clear commitment to defensive cooperation.

The accord should neither be exaggerated into a new military alliance nor dismissed as a ceremonial memorandum. Its value will depend on what the four countries actually produce, the capabilities they develop and the vulnerabilities they eliminate.

Ultimately, Pakistan's peace and security will continue to depend on credible deterrence, economic resilience, and responsible diplomacy and sound political decisions. If implemented wisely, the Badr Accord can strengthen these foundations, but it cannot substitute for them.

