**The strategy of alliances**

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Over the years the US has perfected and executed an extremely well-articulated strategy to establish an incontestable sphere of influence and strategic reach all over the globe. It has two basic components, a military and a diplomatic one.

In the military domain, it has ensured forward deployments of very potent military resources/forces and headquarters in all critical spaces in the world, particularly Europe, the Mediterranean, the Greater Middle East Region (GMER), the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR), the South Pacific and so on. It has designated and prepositioned Unified Combatant Commands (USEUCOM, USCENTCOM, USINDOPACOM, etc) in their prospective areas of operations and responsibilities to ensure prompt military interventions if and when required. On the diplomatic front, it has created a network of alliances/groupings which cover all strategically critical regions in the world. In the post WW2 era, it created the now defunct CENTO and SEATO (and NATO) to ring Mackinder’s Heartland and circumscribe USSR’s territorial ambitions. It still has NATO (and is creating others) which will now ostensibly confront Russia and China! Furthermore, these regional alliances/groupings are reinforced with Coalitions of the Willing, made up of regional and extra regional countries which are not part of the alliance/grouping per se but are roped in for a specific mission/war.

[FBISE to announce SSC Part 1 result on Nov 2](https://nation.com.pk/30-Oct-2021/fbise-to-announce-ssc-part-1-result-on-nov-2)

Such US alliances/groupings are generally built around its geographical Combatant Commands and together they form a very formidable and compelling force that wields and projects immense coercive power into its targeted region/countries. Through a ruthless application of this collective military and diplomatic power the US moves to secure its national and shared interests. The Persian Gulf War 2 and the Afghanistan Campaign are two very recent examples.

Currently, the US views China as an existentialist threat to its pre-eminence in the world. It has apparently decided to fix it in the Asia-Pacific Region (APR) through a multi-pronged strategy. Consistent with its policy, it is building up regional alliances around its Unified Combatant Commands within this region (USCENTCOM, USINDOPACOM) to contain and manage China’s irresistible rise.

In the IPR, it will employ the already formed QUAD (US, Japan, Australia and India) and the AUKUS (Australia, UK and the US) to circumscribe China’s strategic reach, its claims to the South China Sea and to ensure what it calls a Free and Open IPR. When required it will create a Coalition of the Willing made up of South and Far Eastern states (ASEAN?), too. It will want to lay down limits to China’s sphere of influence, deny it access to the mineral and fossil fuel bounties lying in the South China and the East China Seas and forestall a possible reunification with Taiwan. Furthermore, it will exploit the Malacca Straits to dominate and control Chinese trade and SLOCs to and from the GMER, Europe and beyond.

[Doctor killed over resisting dacoits in Karachi](https://nation.com.pk/30-Oct-2021/doctor-killed-over-resisting-dacoits-in-karachi)

In South Asia it is exploiting an already existing albeit very favourable strategic environment. China and India, its ostensible strategic partner, are already at loggerheads in the Himalayas. The US is encouraging it to effectively fix the PLA’s Western Command along the LAC. This will deny any intra-theatre movement of Chinese forces in case of a Sino-US war in the IPR. More importantly, the US will task India to block/disrupt China’s, and by implication the BRI’s, ingress into South Asia and beyond.

In the GMER, the US has set up what appears to be a QUAD 2:0. This alliance/grouping (the US, Israel, the UAE and India) will essentially be built around the USCENTCOM and the militaries of Israel and India with the Arabs bearing the bulk of the financial costs, as usual. QUAD 2:0 is ostensibly intended to block the Chinese ingress from the South-Central Asian Region (SCAR) into the GMER through Iran and Afghanistan. It appears that the US intends to create a Commonwealth of sorts of Gulf Arab states, Israel and India. It could exploit the vast wealth of the Arabs, the technological skills and penchant of the Israelis to innovate and invent and India’s insatiable capacity to consume and absorb. The Abraham Accord, (some call QUAD 2:0 the Indo-Abrahamic construct), provides the perfect basis for such a dynamic economic union to emerge. This will ostensibly pre-empt and balance out the lure of economic developments through China’s BRI. However, the Chinese are already present in the Gulf Arab states and Israel and may not be too willing to budge readily. The US however is preparing grounds to block China economically, diplomatically and militarily from jumping across the Persian Gulf on to the Arabian Peninsula and moving beyond it to Africa, the Mediterranean and Europe.

[Shahid Afridi enjoys 'fantastic victory, fantastic coffee' in Dubai](https://nation.com.pk/30-Oct-2021/shahid-afridi-enjoys-fantastic-victory-fantastic-coffee-in-dubai)

Thus, at the strategic level, the US is positioning alliances/groupings in at least three sub-areas of the APR to contest China’s fast expanding sphere of influence and strategic reach.

China’s total investment in the SCAR-GMER Complex will go well over half a trillion dollars. USCENTCOM and QUAD 2:0 project a very potent threat to it. China will have to act to secure its investments. This will invariably lead to the militarisation of Iran’s Persian Gulf coastline astride the Hormuz Straits and Pakistan’s coastline from Jiwani to Sir Creek. Tensions and polarisation in the GMER will skyrocket.

India is becoming a victim of its megalomania. It is now expected to challenge China in the Himalayas, the IPR and the GMER while contending with a very aggressive Pakistan military all along its western borders. This is clearly beyond a fast-imploding India’s political and military capacities, capabilities and comprehensions.

Pakistan, a supposed major non-NATO ally, finds itself out of favour with the US. Their interests clash where China’s ingress into the region is concerned. Pakistan will come under tremendous pressures from the US, EU, the IFIs, FATF, Gulf Arab states, India (and Terrorism Central) to ditch China, dump and block the BRI-CPEC and join them. They have, however, no near compatible quid pro quos to offer. The US still needs Pakistan for dealing with Afghanistan. Wendy Sherman however laid out the current reality of US-Pakistan relationship in New Delhi. Pakistan must not ruin its strategic partnership with China for a non-existent alliance/grouping with the rather inconsistent US.