

**RESEARCH PAPER****The Concept of Ratification of Treaties and Protocols in Public International Law and Their Non-Binding Effects on Developing Countries' Sovereignty: A Case Study of Pakistan****¹Muhammad Afzal, and ²Dr Shahzada Aamir Mushtaq**

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International treaties and protocols are a dilemma for developing nations like Pakistan. Hence, this study evaluates their ratification under public international law. Ratification, a rigorous process of approving a treaty, often fails due to domestic and global issues. Poor nations like Pakistan have greater challenges due to low economic resources, institutional competence, and political resolve. This study uses doctrinal and qualitative methods to evaluate legal texts, international treaties, and secondary sources to determine ratification and compliance criteria. Case studies explore Pakistan's human rights, environmental, and trade treaty experience. Geopolitics and domestic restraints hinder Pakistan's treaty compliance and execution gap. Pakistan's strategic location, ties to key nations, and geopolitics influence its treaty practices. Pakistan's international compliance is affected by national security and regional issues in the case study. The paper suggests supporting emerging states with international support and flexible ways and aligning ratification and implementation.

Keywords: Non-Binding Effects Developing Countries, Pakistan, Protocols, Public International Law, Ratification, Treaties**Introduction**

Ratification by sovereign states of different international treaties and protocols occupies a central place in changing legal, diplomatic, and political environments (Crootoof, 2016). Treaties in public international law are basic instruments of world cooperation, forming a general legal premise which is supposed to provide the basis for peace, security, trade, human rights, and protection of the environment. Ratification is the process by which a state demonstrates ratification to be formally bound by the provisions of the treaty, showing commitment from a country for continuous observance of norms and principles in international relations (Klabbers, 2023). This is, interestingly, one of the processes essential to the development of relations between states with respect to fostering multilateralism and commitment to international obligations (O'Connell, 2008).

While this mechanism is central in global governance, the implications of the treaty's ratification are conventionally not consistent between nations, especially in any comparison between developed and developing nations (Roberts, Parks, & Vásquez, 2004). The case is no different in the instance of developing countries, like Pakistan, when an international treaty is usually signed under great difficulties brought about by socio-economic, political, and other legal problems. Treaties concerning human rights, environmental concerns, and economic reforms often require stringent commitments which involve vast domestic reforms and financial resources (Abu-Nimer & Kadayifci, 2011). Developing nations face common problems of poverty, political instability, and various institutional capacity issues that prevail and are usually expected to comply with the very high standards of such international agreements (Cheema, 2005). Such a gap between international obligations and domestic capabilities often results in a situation where ratified treaties become non-binding

in practice due to the impossibility of the state to comply with their provisions. Developing countries usually come under pressure from more powerful nations or international bodies concerning ratification (Nollkaemper, 2014). This paper, therefore, is meant to discuss the process of ratification of treaties and protocols with a prime focus on how developing nations in general, and Pakistan in particular, have confronted such challenges. It also looks into the non-binding nature of the treaties themselves, where enforcement is obstructed by domestic limitations and those dynamics of influence on the status of Pakistan in international law (Fon, 2011). The paper uses a case study of Pakistan to look into the complexity of geopolitical factors, domestic legal frameworks, and institutional weaknesses that have combined to negatively impact the ability of the country to comply with international commitments.

The main research problem this paper address is that Pakistan, despite ratifying most of the major international treaties, especially those concerning human rights, environmental protection, and trade issues, fails to live up to international expectations due to a variety of internally oppressed limitations involving economic resources, political instability, and legal constraints. This gap in ratification and compliance produces serious questions regarding the effectiveness of international law within developing countries. It also emphasizes such limitations as leading to non-binding effects. The study investigates whether Pakistan has ratified a number of treaties but is always facing problems related to complete implementation and compliance, which in turn affects its intended standing in the international community.

Material and Methods

This paper has adopted a doctrinal and descriptive approach to research methodology for the elaboration of the concept of ratification and its non-binding effect in view of Pakistan. Doctrinal analysis primarily deals with discussing, in this research paper, the several legal texts and principles that govern international treaties, especially focusing on the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which elaborates the process concerning the law of ratification. This legal review also draws on the review of certain treaties already signed by Pakistan, with a keen focus on the commitment they created and the level of fulfilment of that commitment by Pakistan. Descriptive and thematic analysis is woven into the study to review the broad context of treaty implementation in developing countries. Descriptive analysis will clearly outline the legal frameworks concerning international treaties and their ratification processes, with a particular emphasis on Pakistan. This encompasses the analysis of different legislative mechanisms adopted for treaty ratification within Pakistan and the steps taken for domestic implementation. The thematic analysis identifies the recurring patterns of challenges influencing Pakistan's compliance with international law, such as economic limitations, among other forces like political instability and cultural resistance in the approach to international treaties.

The paper, applied a research methodology with the approach of a case study that would involve a focused examination of the experience of Pakistan with specific key international treaties related to the protection of human rights, concerns about the environment, and international trade. It identifies the gulf between formal ratification and actual implementation. The present research traces Pakistan's ratification of and compliance with treaties on human rights, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and various commitments under the World Trade Organization frameworks. The above approach, while underlining that there are problems in the way Pakistan meets international commitments, explains the broader implications for developing countries with similar agreements with the international community. The information is based on a mix of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include international treaties, domestic legal documents, and official government publications related to Pakistan's treaty commitments. Secondary sources refer to various legal commentaries, case laws, academic journals, and reports of

international organizations that offer an understanding of Pakistan's compliance with international treaties and the difficulties of meeting those commitments.

This research paper, therefore, offers a wide-angled approach to the ratification process and its non-binding effects in the case of Pakistan by applying this three-legged approach: doctrinal analysis, case studies review, and thematic review. Such approaches allow an in-depth review of the legal and practical barriers that hamper the capacity of Pakistan to translate its international commitments into their full implementation in support of an analytical study on finding ways for better compliance.

Literture Review

Treaties

A treaty is a formal agreement binding on two or more sovereign states or international organizations. Treaties would be comparable to contracts between nations, and the range of subjects could include trade, peace, environmental protection of human rights, and security concerns. Upon ratification, a treaty is a clear legal undertaking to which the parties will be obliged under international law (Kolb, 2023). Treaties are either bilateral between two states or multilateral, involving more than two states. They bind only the states which have ratified or acceded to them. Treaties are negotiated and drafted by the parties to the treaty and usually follow a signing process, after which ratification occurs (Fitzmaurice, 2014). A signature to the treaty shows an intention by the state to adhere to its terms, while ratification is the formal process through which such a treaty becomes legally binding on the latter state and oft jointly requires approval by a state's legislature or governing body (Von Stein, 2005).

- I. United Nations Charter, 1945: The founding treaty of the United Nations to establish the basic principles of international peace and security.
- II. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT): A treaty aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons.
- III. Paris Agreement of 2015: It is a multilateral agreement with commitments by signatory countries to reduce carbon emissions globally.

Protocols

A protocol is an international instrument that supplements, amends, or adds to an existing treaty. In this light, protocols can either create additional commitments or merely clarify provisions of the main treaty. They permit states to take on more detailed or updated legal obligations than those that had been initially assumed without having to renegotiate the earlier treaty. Protocols (Matheson, 2017) are sometimes optional or requisite, and this generally depends on the terms of the original treaty. Actually, in most instances, states are not obliged to accept the protocol except if they decide so. A state may sign and ratify the protocol in addition to the treaty, hence becoming a party to the enhanced or supplementary obligations contained in the protocol.

- I. Kyoto Protocol, 1997: Protocol under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with legally binding targets concerning the reduction of greenhouse gasses (Lovett, 2005).
- II. Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions (1977): Protocols which further developed protection provided by the earlier Geneva Conventions and put a greater emphasis on protection of victims of armed conflict (Cassese, 1984).

Protocols gave flexibility to the international legal system because states could negotiate specific or new obligations without changing the whole treaty. The theory might, therefore, be useful in the adaptation of treaties to emergent international needs, such as new environmental challenges or human rights concerns(Solf, 2023).

The Concept of Ratification of Treaties in Public International Law

Ratification, in the context of public international law, is an integral and formal part of the procedure for creating treaties whereby a state confirms that it consents to a treaty and thus becomes legally bound by its terms, normally after having signed the same. As distinguished from the signing of the treaty, which is no more than an indication of an intention to adhere to the contents of the treaty, it is an act of ratification that gives the treaty legal effect in that State. It transforms the preliminary undertaking of a state into an obligation binding under international law. This is the difference between signing and ratification: Signing refers to preliminary agreement to the terms of a treaty, while ratification involves the full or formal acceptance of obligations of the treaty by the State(Roberg, 2006).

Under Article 2(1)(b) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969), ratification involves a series of formal legal and political procedures within the domestic setting of the State. In most cases, this requires the ratifying approval of a state's legislation, such as a parliament or congress, which determines whether or not the treaty is in the best national interests, legal systems, and constitutional principles of the State. The procedure ensures that international treaties are not immediately enfranchised without examination, which upholds national sovereignty and the legal consistency of a state. Through parliamentary approval or legislative enactments, ratification signifies confirmation by a state to balance its international commitments with interests of legality and politics domestically. In many countries, although an executive head of State may sign a treaty, ratification cannot be complete until the legislative house has gone through and approved it(Dörr & Schmalenbach, 2018).

The process of ratification often involves a multilevel consideration, with the most common debates amongst political leaders and/or lawmakers over how a given treaty has that possible economic, social, or security consequence, particularly in the event that the treaty places critical burdens that may be affecting domestic policies. International treaties, for example, on universal environmental standards or even human rights, may require considerable reforms or financial investments that might be too contentious or difficult for a state to conduct. Therefore, ratification is a very lengthy and laborious process that reflects the broader political, economic, and social priorities of the State in question. Further, a state may decide upon the ratification of any given treaty by mentioning its reservations and/or various exceptions-the international law does subscribe to such a procedure insofar as they do not detract from the spirit of the treaty as a whole. These reservations enable states to exempt or otherwise modify the legal effects of certain treaty provisions; this further reflects the nuanced and strategic thinking behind the act of ratification(Villiger, 2009).

Although ratification is usually regarded as the final act of a state to bind itself to a treaty, it is evidenced, under international law that the same treaty will come into effect for the very State concerned. From then onwards, the State shall carry out the provisions of the treaty domestically, either by new laws enacted or existing ones amended and mechanisms born to ensure compliance. Non-implementation of a ratified treaty may expose states to international legal disputes, reputational consequences, or even sanctions, as may be provided in the mechanism of a particular treaty. The seriousness of such a commitment on the part of the ratifying State to fulfil its international legal obligations thus partly comes across with the procedure for ratification(Gehring, 2007).

But for most developing countries, like Pakistan, special kinds of difficulties arise in the way of ratification. While such countries may be signing and ratifying the treaties with the best of intentions, the prevailing domestic circumstances, like frail institutional capacity, economic hurdles, or political turmoil, obstruct the complete fulfilment of treaty obligations. The problem is that, all too often, this ratification does not lead to the treaty being fully applied in practice; a state may simply not have the resources or political will to carry out its provisions. This gap between formal ratification and practical implementation is particularly acute in areas such as human rights, environmental protection, and trade, which may require major policy changes and sizable financial investments that are beyond the capacity of developing countries (Ghouri, 2021).

Challenges Faced by Developing Countries in Ratification of Treaties

Although ratification represents the formal undertaking by a state in regard to a treaty, developing countries do present several complex problems in their ability to fully adhere to their international commitments. These are highly complex issues arising from the interaction of several economic, institutional, and political factors, leading to a lack of ratification and, subsequently, the inability to implement the provisions of a treaty. Many times, these commitments under international agreements call for far-reaching reforms or policy adjustments that developing countries, due to their limited capacities, are poorly placed to implement. The major problem that developing countries, such as Pakistan, bound by a treaty, have to deal with is that of scant economic resources. International treaties adopt policies that demand much financial investment towards compliance. Treaties on environmental protection or public health, for example, require the states to apply expensive programs or regulatory approaches, which would be highly difficult and even impossible for countries that experience budgetary deficits or economic instability. In fact, like most developing countries, Pakistan generally involves economic stresses, where survival needs become the foremost short-term imperatives for individuals. As such, these states fail to translate comprehensively the treaty obligations into their respective domestic frameworks, often slowing or partially capturing the agreed provisions. Where there is a political will to implement a limited fiscal capacity makes full compliance with the treaty obligation impracticable (Nolasco, 2014).

The developing countries also face institutional capacity. Effective implementation of international treaties requires a strong legal and administrative infrastructure that is capable of bringing domestic legislation in line with the provisions of the treaty, monitoring compliance, and taking measures to ensure enforcement. However, many developing countries, including Pakistan, either lack the required institutional frameworks or even the expertise to carry out such a multi-dimensional task. Displacements in governance structures, poorly trained personnel, and weak legal mechanisms increase the gap between the signing and implementation of international treaties. These weaknesses in institutional capacity could cause a disconnection between what a state is formally committed to under international law and what, in practice, it is able to enforce or realize on the ground.

The second most significant cause of hurdles in the ratification process in developing countries is political instability. For example, in countries like Pakistan, where changes in government, intrastate conflicts, or even political turmoil occur quite frequently, the process of continuity with respect to the ratification and implementation of international treaties is usually broken. Normally, in common practice, political instability creates an environment where international commitments are pushed to the side to make room for more pressing domestic issues. For instance, a treaty on the reform of human rights may be perceived to be less related compared to direct problems of security or striving for political power. The change of government or division of political leadership leads to the eventual loss of momentum that is crucial to giving the ratification or practice to a treaty, thus leaving the international treaties unfulfilled.

International law is an increasingly complex set of frameworks. Most international treaties are proposals by the more developed nations or international organizations that have sophisticated legal systems. These include various provisions of an intricate nature that require technical knowledge and acumen in legal matters for interpretation and putting into practice. This, therefore, has created a big barrier for developing countries that have little experience in negotiating or managing international legal obligations. As far as Pakistan is concerned, the complexities of international treaties may, after ratification and incorporation, conflict with existing legal frameworks influenced by the unique socio-political environment of the country coupled with its unique legal history. The divergence in such a situation between international norms and local tradition of the law may result in a mere formality being observed to ratify treaties without their proper incorporation into the domestic law, thus leaving lacunae. Developing countries are very often compelled to sign an international treaty under strong external compulsions from powerful nations or international organizations.

The reason generally becomes one of political or economic incentives that revolve around foreign aid facilitation, trade agreements, or development assistance. The very encouragement provided to developing countries pushes them to ratify treaties that they may not be fully prepared to implement, thus leading to a situation where ratification is pursued more for short-term gains rather than for the commitment required over the longer term by the treaty obligations. For example, Pakistan may sign an international trade treaty that would create some possibility of entering the markets of developed nations; however, their domestic economic structures are not in a position to meet the requirements for activity generated by a treaty. As a result, that would mean that Pakistan would perform poorly in meeting its radiation. This sets up a dynamic in which developing countries are often at the mercy of more developed countries, where they have little choice but to join treaties that reflect the interests of other countries rather than their own interests or capacity (Fitzmaurice, Fitzmaurice, Elias, & Elias, 2005).

While the ratification of treaties may confer upon states immediate access to international aid or the promise of some form of economic gain, long-term commitments under such treaties almost invariably burden and overextend the domestic resources of developing nations, further exacerbating problems that those nations already face. For example, an environmental reform-based treaty might offer short-term financial incentives provided by developed nations but have long-term set targets for the environment that could be too burdensome to handle for the economy of the developing country and would lead to a diversion of resources from other key sectors (McKibben & Western, 2020).

The Non-Binding Effects of International Treaties

Effects relating to developing countries bring into light the reality that even though such countries have signed a treaty; they are, to some extent, unable to fulfil the said obligation. Such a non-binding nature of effects arises when a state, owing to a number of hindrances, is not in a position to completely satisfy that which legally is expected of it by an international agreement. This incompleteness or inconsistency arises when the state, although having agreed to the terms of the treaty by ratifying, is faced with a practical obstacle in the form of limited resources, conflicting domestic priorities, or institutional weaknesses that restrict the said state from discharging its commitments under the treaty effectively. In developing countries like Pakistan, the non-binding effects are far more outplayed, reflecting the complex element of international legal obligations juxtaposed against domestic realities (Zimmermann & Jauer, 2021).

In many cases, economic exclusion plays a role as one of the main reasons for non-binding implications. Economic limitation can be the greatest contributor to this situation in the case of most developing countries that do not possess the financial capability to introduce the reforms or programs required by international treaties. This is particularly

true in the case of those treaties whose implementation requires huge investments either in infrastructure, technology, or public services. For instance, environmental treaties such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change oblige states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and work towards renewable energy resources. This demands a great amount of financial and technological resources, which most developing countries, including Pakistan, are devoid of. In this respect, just like many other underdeveloped nations of the world, reliance on energy production has to be imparted for fossil fuel resources due to their accessibility with ease and low cost compared to renewable sources of energy. Moving away from that dependency will require massive investments in renewable energy infrastructure, which, at this time, the economy of Pakistan cannot afford. Moreover, a country needs to address more general issues of economic instability and widespread poverty, which puts the government in a very difficult position to prioritize ecological sustainability at the expense of its people's immediate economic needs(Gomaa, 2001).

This inability to reach these higher thresholds set by various treaties creates a gap between what is expected from the international community concerning practical realities on the ground. In this regard, Pakistan's commitment regarding climate change was to join the ranks of countries committed to a reduction in carbon emissions as set forth in the Paris Agreement. However, it has its own domestic challenges to overcome: the unavailability and unaffordability of alternative energy, coupled with development imperatives, have cast a shadow on its targets. Thus, despite having signed and then ratified the convention with the intention to follow it, Pakistan's performance regarding climate change is at a snail's pace and receives criticism at international levels as not being compliant in nature. This is indicative of the discrepancy between formal ratification and practical implementation, where developing countries are going to be held to the same standards as larger developed nations in spite of their grossly disparate economic and technological capacities(Nyekwere, Okogbule, & Agwor, 2022).

These nonbinding influences do not stop at environmental treaties, either, but reach into a very broad array of international agreements in such areas as human rights, trade, and public health. For instance, many treaties dealing with human rights call on states to reform their legal systems, enhance governance, and develop social services to protect vulnerable populations. While developing countries will sign these agreements, Pakistan as an international norm, find it very cumbersome to materialize the necessary reforms due to a lot of impediments. In addition, weak governance structures, corruption, and political instability mark the task even more complex and complicated, which typically leads to delayed or incomplete implementation. This tends, in its consequences, to engender a perception of non-compliance, which may not accurately reflect the actuality of the situation, inasmuch as the state concerned is making a real effort to discharge obligations to the best of its ability in the light of its domestic situation(Mändveer, 2022).

In particular, this gap between the negotiation and ratification of treaties has become self-reinforcing and unequal since the burden of non-implementation falls most heavily upon developing countries. Hence, they are threatened with international pressure, their reputation will be ruined, or even sanctions because of non-full implementation of those treaties whose ratification they have joined. These countries are facing an uphill struggle to meet these commitments because deep-seated systemic inequalities exist within the international rule of law. The pressure of international treaties, especially for countries like Pakistan, amalgamates with the domestic limitations to form a complex environment where, often, mere formal ratification may not imply substantial compliance, thus leaving the state prey to the possible adverse consequences of the international legal regimes(Höflinger, 2020).

Another aspect of the non-binding influence of treaties on developing nations indeed relates to geopolitical pressure imposed by the more influential nations and international organizations. Certainly, most developing countries are often influenced or sometimes even

coerced to sign treaties because of diplomatic or economic pressure. When signing international agreements, they may include extended foreign aid, development assistance, or trade benefits. While this may ensure short-run ratification, the long run might be hard to realize due to a decline in or contingent external support. This places the developing countries in a situation where they ratify treaties when it comes to their present benefits but are unable to comply in the long run with the conditions in those treaties, making them nonbinding into the future (Mahaseth & Subramaniam, 2021).

The usual reactions by the international community to these non-binding effects become criticisms, sanctions, and reputational damage against the developing countries concerned. However, such an approach neglects the contribution given by systemic inequalities to the problem. The rigid application of international treaty obligations neglects the structural challenges that many developing countries face with respect to underdevelopment, political instability, and institutional weakness. This has a side effect of creating an imbalance in the global legal system, whereby developing countries are asked, in certain respects, to rise to the same standards as their more developed counterparts despite vast disparities in their respective capacities for implementation (LeClercq, 2023).

The ratified but non-binding value of treaties in Pakistan speaks to greater challenges across many developing countries. On the one hand, the country has expressed intent to be a player within the international community by signing a host of treaties related, *inter alia*, to climate change, trade, and human rights. Serious impediments to full compliance remain. Because these are due to economic, political, and institutional barriers, Pakistan cannot translate the pledged commitments under international law into practice. Therefore, despite efforts being made in this regard, the country has continued to remain vulnerable to international scrutiny and criticism (Crawford, 2022).

Pakistan's Experience with International Treaties: Case Study

Indeed, Pakistan's experience with international treaties and protocols reflects the problems of balancing domestic priorities with international commitments that are common in many developing countries. Through the ratification of some important treaties in different fields, like human rights, trade, and environmental protection, Pakistan has assumed its position within the world legal system. In practice, however, the actual implementation of the provisions under these treaties remains partial, as political, cultural, and economic questions, aside from purely legal issues, generally face the country and create a gap between formal commitment and practical compliance.

In the realm of human rights, Pakistan has signed internationally acclaimed conventions like the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Therefore, these instruments show that Pakistan, at least amidst the spirit of the papers, desires to join the mainstream of international human rights standards on such key issues as civil liberties, political rights, and gender equality (Joseph & Castan, 2013). The ratification of the ICCPR in 2010, for example, merely represented a promise from Pakistan to safeguard the rights concerning freedom of speech, religion, and protection against discrimination. However, such commitment has almost become a routine in order to betray it in domestic implementation on account of intervening political and cultural hurdles (Von Stein, 2016).

One of those contentious areas is the freedom of speech and religious freedom, where many countries have voiced substantial criticism against the blasphemy laws in Pakistan; for example, the blasphemy laws provide severe punishments for acts considered insulting to religion; this is cited against the principles of free speech and religious tolerance under the ICCPR. Despite ratifying this treaty, the legal framework regarding this aspect remains rigid in Pakistan; this is largely due to the socio-religious context and, of course, the influence of conservative political forces that make it resilient toward reform. These laws

have not only managed to confine free expression but also served as a basis for mob violence and killing outside the rule of law, underlining further the gap between Pakistan's commitments at an international level and domestic practice(Langlaude, 2007).

Another such point is that of gender equality, which also comes under the ambit of conflict between international commitments and their ground realities. Pakistan signed CEDAW, which calls upon the state to terminate discrimination against women in all forms. Yet, the country retains substantial legal and cultural barriers to inhibit it from materializing this commitment in full. Matters such as gender-based violence, inaccessibility of education and employment to women, and Family Law discriminative practices continue to create more obstacles. The combination of strong, traditional patriarchal norms with weak mechanisms for enforcing laws that protect the rights of women has resulted in formal commitments by Pakistan to international standards of gender equality, not translating into domestic policies. It has resulted many times in international criticism as Pakistan did little for the advancement of women's rights after signing CEDAW(Englehart & Miller, 2014).

Besides human rights, the international trade agreements that Pakistan has entered into are another way to understand the finer aspects of treaty ratification and implementation. Being a member of the WTO, Pakistan has ratified various agreements on trade-related issues that were conducive to free and fair trade on the world canvas. Through these agreements, Pakistan became bound to adhere to international trade laws, reduce tariffs before other countries, and eliminate trade barriers. These commitments have the prospect of more significant economic integration and access to international markets but also pose some serious challenges for Pakistan's domestic industries. Because of a deficiency in restructuring, technology transformation, and adequate investment, the economies of Pakistan are not optimally positioned for agriculture and textile products to compete in open market competition. Such sensitive industries in Pakistan are exposed to acute competition from the developed economies due to demands for market opening and reduction of protectionist measures under WTO agreements. This has brought inconsistency in properly complying with what these agreements called for since the protection of domestic industries has often clashed with the requirements of international trade treaties. Therefore, it is deduced that Pakistan signs this sort of agreement just to get access to international markets while failing to implement the necessary reforms; thus, it is perceived as partially or non-compliant with its trade obligations(Afzal, 2006).

This is particularly important given the economic dimensions of treaty ratification, wherein Pakistan subscribes to a great number of international treaties on the basis that it will be guaranteed some form of economic benefit in the form of investment, aid, or access to preferential trading schemes. Unfortunately, the long-term commitments within these treaties actually outstrip Pakistan's ability to deliver due to resource constraints and a lack of major austerity measures that can be taken without undermining domestic economic stability. For example, Pakistan's involvement in various bilateral trade agreements and regional economic initiatives has exposed its domestic industries to competitive forces to which they are not yet adequately prepared to respond. This has made the requirement for supportive policies at times that run in conflict with the spirit of these international agreements.

The role and contribution of Pakistan to environmental treaties like the Paris Agreement on Climate Change were just another example of the challenges many developing nations faced in balancing international obligations with domestic realities. Although Pakistan inked the Paris Agreement, which called on countries to pursue ambitious action on climate change by reducing carbon emissions, economic dependence on fossil fuels makes it very difficult to meet the stringent targets of the treaty amid ill-prepared infrastructure. Energy in Pakistan largely depends on coal and other non-renewable reserves; thus, to shift these towards renewable forms of energy production will be highly technology-driven. In this respect, huge investments in technology and infrastructure are

required, which are presently lacking in the country. Thus, Pakistan has been slow in accomplishing its goals with respect to reducing carbon emissions despite formally committing to objectives set by the Paris Agreement. The international community, while acknowledging that Pakistan is a victim of climate change, does not stop asking for more, putting it in such an uncomfortable position that it barely meets its national energy requirements and international commitments related to environmental concerns (Dimitrov, 2016).

Geopolitical Considerations in Pakistan's Treaty Ratification

The acceptance and execution of the foreign treaty by Pakistan are geopolitical in nature. The geopolitical challenges faced by Pakistan in the region constitute its South Asian borders, sharing with India, China, and Afghanistan. The same is reflected in its national security strategy and international agreements.

Due to its geographical importance, Pakistan is bound to manage foreign policy and its international work. Geographical and geopolitics are placing Pakistan in an unsafe regional balance of power because of the CPEC and Afghan conflicts. Regional security and strategic relations are influencing the ratification and execution of various treaties by Pakistan (Hussain, Khan, Hussain, Nawaz, & Ahmad, 2021).

Geopolitics influences treaty decisions, and this stands out in Pakistan's NPT posture. In Pak, there was resistance which came up against the NPT in order to stem the growth of nuclear proliferation and encourage disarmament. The whole world supported this treaty, yet Pak opposed it. This is rejected for the reason that the nuclear deterrent against India forms part and parcel of the administration. In Pak security policy, priority is given to the South Asian nuclear power balance. Because of geopolitics, Pak's security aims to stand in contradiction with treaties related to disarmament.

Geopolitics determines the direction of Pakistan's NPT policies. Non-participatory policy in the NPT influences international arms control and disarmament. The interspace of national security with foreign expectations determines the course of policies followed by Pakistan. The perceived regional strategic interests of Pakistan are weighed against geopolitical pressure to toe the line of global non-proliferation rules, thus underscoring the challenge of growing countries in balancing internal security with international treaty responsibilities.

The Pakistani stand on the treaty, therefore, directly relate to US-China relations. On the one hand, there is the US, an essential partner in the War on Terror and in international disarmament processes, and Pakistan to accession to the NPT and disarmament. On the other hand, there is China, the key ally for China supporting its stand on the nuclear issue, which highlights the most important factor of bilateral relationships regarding treaties. Due to geopolitics being a puzzling issue, decisions about foreign treaties require a balance between international norms and strategic partnerships (Sultan, 2011).

Geopolitics influences the ratification of treaties as the membership of Pakistan depicts membership to the UN and EU. Notwithstanding the UN membership and international arrangements, the treaty responsibilities are influenced by diplomatic and strategic relations. Pakistan is a part of UN peacekeeping and climate change agreements such as Paris to resolve local and regional challenges (Zaman, 2022).

The Pakistani geopolitics would undermine the international standards. The strategic goals and alliances may be at variance with the international and internal environment and hamper the commitments of treaties. Geopolitics can impede the commitments by developing countries in general, and especially when they negate national security and strategy (Shah, 2021).

Conclusion

The ratification of international treaties and protocols is an opportunity and a challenge for countries in the developing world, such as Pakistan. While international agreements offer paths to global cooperation and economic aid, the non-binding effects of these treaties often show the sanctions that developing nations face in complying fully with international law. In terms of Pakistan, the tension between its domestic legal framework, economic capacity, and geopolitical imperatives often means partial or delayed implementation of obligations arising out of such treaties. The paper underlines, with due consideration to developing countries, the urgent need to nuance the ratification process within public international law. This may also form a platform for further research on how the developing nations could be assisted in carrying out their commitments under the treaties, including capacity-building efforts, technical assistance, and more flexible frameworks of the treaties themselves, considering specific country situations prevailing therein and in countries like Pakistan.

Recommendations

To address the challenges faced by developing countries like Pakistan in treaty ratification and compliance, the following recommendations are proposed:

Capacity Building and Technical Assistance: International organizations and developed countries should provide the necessary technical and financial assistance to enable Pakistan and other developing countries to develop such institutional capacity that would ensure satisfactory implementation of treaty obligations. Government officials, legal experts, and other stakeholders involved in enforcing treaty requirements need to be trained.

Tailored Treaty Provisions for Developing Countries: Treaties must be more in compliant with problems of developing countries by allowing additional time and realistic commitments. This would do much in ensuring that the developing countries are not overwhelmed with complicated requirements under a particular treaty but comply with their obligations over time.

Domestic Legal Reforms: The Country should undertake legal reforms in order to bring domestic laws in line with international treaty obligations. A more robust legal and institutional framework in Pakistan would go a long way in helping address gaps in the implementation of human rights, environmental, and trade-related treaties.

Enhanced Diplomacy and Negotiation Strategies: Pakistan needs to adopt a much more strategic approach towards treaty negotiations, keeping in mind its specific needs and limitations during any agreement process. Utilizing better multilateral forums where the developing world has a louder voice would be of immense use in tilting the scales in terms of the power balance during such discussions related to treaties.

Monitoring and Accountability Mechanisms: International agreements should build in regular monitoring and assessing of implementation mechanisms for recipient countries. This would introduce some transparency and ensure gradual improvement in compliance with treaty requirements.

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