

Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Travels to Kabul for Trilateral Talks with China and Afghanistan

August 20, 2025

— Categories: *Breaking News*



Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, arrived in Kabul today to lead the sixth trilateral meeting involving Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan. The talks, first institutionalized in 2017, aim to advance cooperation in trade, regional

connectivity, and counterterrorism, while also providing a platform for dialogue on security and economic projects.

The Foreign Office said that Dar's visit comes after Pakistan and Afghanistan elevated their diplomatic relations earlier this year to ambassadorial level, a move facilitated through mediation efforts by China in Beijing. The trilateral meeting will be held alongside bilateral talks between Dar and Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. Pakistan's delegation also includes Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A key subject under discussion will be the Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan (UAP) Railway Project, which seeks to link South Asia with Central Asia. During his previous visit to Kabul, Dar signed a framework agreement for a joint feasibility study of the project. The corridor has been described by both sides as a strategic undertaking that could significantly boost regional trade, energy transit, and economic integration.

This meeting also marks the first visit to Afghanistan by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi since the Taliban returned to power in 2021. Analysts view Beijing's presence as a sign of China's growing role in facilitating dialogue between Islamabad and Kabul, while also advancing its own interest in strengthening regional stability and connectivity projects under the Belt and Road Initiative.

The backdrop of the talks is complicated by Pakistan's domestic policy on undocumented migrants, most of whom are Afghans. Since 2023, Islamabad has implemented a phased deportation plan citing security concerns, which has strained relations between the two neighbours. From

September 1, the government intends to extend deportations to documented refugees whose residency permits have expired, unless further decisions are made. This policy has drawn criticism from rights groups but has been defended by officials as a necessary step to safeguard national security.

For Afghanistan, where the Taliban government is still struggling with international recognition, the trilateral framework offers a rare opportunity to engage at a higher diplomatic level. While many global powers continue to maintain limited contact with Kabul, both Pakistan and China have adopted pragmatic approaches, focusing on economic and security cooperation rather than political recognition.

The meetings in Kabul are expected to examine pathways for coordinated counterterrorism measures, as both Pakistan and China remain concerned about militant groups operating across the Afghan border. With instability in the region affecting Chinese investments and Pakistani security alike, the trilateral dialogue is seen as a practical mechanism to align interests.

Observers believe the outcome of this round of talks could have long-term significance, not only for regional security but also for economic connectivity across South and Central Asia. By bringing together Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China, the trilateral format seeks to balance security imperatives with economic opportunities at a time when the region faces shifting alliances and heightened geopolitical tensions.