

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Strategic Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The realization that artificial intelligence (AI) is not just the latest technological shibboleth but is becoming a game-changing strategic variable in foreign policy, diplomacy, security, economic statecraft and global governance. The digital international competitive landscape, cyber insecurity and strategic rivalry along with data-driven diplomacy suggest that AI is likely to have serious implications for Pakistan which this article seeks to examine in respect of domestic and foreign-policy perspectives. A qualitative documentary and findings-based conceptual design is utilized within a mixed-method epistemology: utilizing peer-reviewed literature, policy papers, official AI and digital policy documents, regional security studies. It argues that AI will, to varying degrees but interconnectedly across the following varied channels of influence on Pakistan foreign policy: diplomatic decision support, digital public diplomacy, cyber and AI governance, economic diplomacy, regional deterrence, and great-power (technological) competition. The results demonstrate the capacity of AI to make Pakistan's diplomatic forecasting, crisis monitoring, consular services, diaspora engagement and international economic positioning more robust. It might also amplify algorithmic dependency, misinformation, surveillance, data sovereignty and cyber escalation issues, as well as heightening India-Pakistan strategic instability. This article provides a strategic framework for viewing AI as both a tool and an environment of foreign policy. It finds that Pakistan needs to develop a more unified strategy for an AI-enabled foreign policy, connecting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, national security institutions, digital regulators as well as academia and the private sector while being in line with ethical principles for global access to AI arms control practices and regional risk-reduction efforts.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Pakistan; Foreign Policy; Digital Diplomacy; Cyber Diplomacy; Strategic Stability; AI Governance; South Asia

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence has started to reconfigure the circumstances in which states assess threats, engage foreign publics, conclude international treaties, respond to crises and compete technologically. Traditionally, statecraft was examined in reference to diplomacy, military strength, economic power,

geographic positioning and political leadership. But now, in the age of industrial digitalization, data and algorithms and platform infrastructure and cyber capabilities (and computational decision-support systems) are added sources of power — a new front upon which nations can be resilient (or vulnerable). The lexicon of global scholarship on AI and diplomacy is increasingly addressing the transformative dimensions of how AI could change diplomatic analysis, negotiation support, public diplomacy, consular delivery, crisis warning and even parts of global governance—to say nothing of efforts to improve office automation (Cafiero, 2023; Manor 2026; Mostafaei et al., 2025).

The topic is especially significant for Pakistan, as foreign policy underlies a complicated amalgamation of security pressures, regional rivalries, economic challenges, diaspora mobilization and technological dependence and strategic relations with China, the United States, the Muslim world, and multilateral institutions. Historically Pakistan's foreign policy has had to juggle national security concerns and development needs, coupled with aspirations for diplomatic legitimacy. AI poses an extra level of concern to these issues: intelligence analysis, information warfare, cyber diplomacy, crisis stability, and economic competitiveness—as well as the US's capacity to meaningfully engage in global rule-making around emerging technologies (Roy & Reichberg 2024; Rehman & Wadood 2025).

Pakistan has already ventured into digital-policy territory with the Digital Pakistan Policy and the National Artificial Intelligence Policy, both of which position technology as a catalyst for knowledge economy, innovation, public-sector reform and inclusive development. While these are domestic policies and set the stage for AI readiness, the foreign-policy aspects of AI have been only relatively under-explored in academic and policy literature. Pakistan can or cannot implement AI tools is not even the crux of the matter; can the state forge pathways for incorporation of AI within foreign policy such that strategic autonomy, public trust, data sovereignty, diplomatic credibility and national security are preserved (Government of Pakistan, 2018, 2025).

The existing literature on Pakistan and AI is dispersed across multiple streams. On the internet diplomacy and digital media or social media use of Pakistan embassies in others, cyber diplomacy, automation of AI in military affairs (military-digitalization), national security dimensions of AI, South Asian strategic stability with special reference to India-Pakistan rivalry. Many of these studies are enormously insightful but do not tie the systems applications of AI to foreign-policy formulation, diplomatic institutions, economic statecraft, multilateral norm-building and regional crisis management within a single strategic frame (Ashraf, 2023; Habibullah & Xiguang, 2022; Khurshid, 2023; Topychkanov, 2020). This article fills that gap by considering AI as a trans-sectoral strategic variable involved in both the content and process of Pakistan's foreign policy.

The author states that AI could become a foreign-policy force multiplier for Pakistan if it is integrated into human-centric state diplomacy, institutional coordination, ethical safeguards and regional confidence-building measures. Hence without mitigation measures, AI can exacerbate dependency on foreign technology companies, spread disinformation, create new cyber vulnerabilities and force rapid decision-making in crisis situations with India. This necessitates a strategy that goes beyond technological optimism to a realistic evaluation of opportunities, risks and policy needs (Abbasi & Uzzaman, 2022; Feijoo et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2022).

Research Objectives

1. To examine the major ways in which AI can influence Pakistan's foreign-policy formulation, diplomatic practice, and international engagement.

2. To analyze the strategic opportunities and risks associated with AI-enabled diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, economic statecraft, and regional security in Pakistan's context.

Research Questions

1. How can AI transform the processes and instruments through which Pakistan formulates and implements foreign policy?
2. What opportunities and risks does AI create for Pakistan's digital diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, economic diplomacy, and regional security posture?

LITERATURE REVIEW

AI, Diplomacy, and Foreign-Policy Transformation

New research indicates how diplomacy may be transformed by AI at three broad levels. In this role, it can aid diplomatic efforts through processing vast amounts of open-source data, uncovering early signs of conflict, mapping global narratives and refining policy simulations. Second, because foreign ministries now operate in algorithmically mediated information spaces, they can reshape the environment of diplomacy. Third, it can serve a diplomatic object as states will have to negotiate norms on AI ethics, safety, military uses, data governance and cross-border technology flows (Cafiero et al., 2023; Manor qin., 2026; Mostafaei et al., 2025).

The AI is also related to tech-diplomacy. Feijoo et al. Millar et al. (2020) posit that the social and geopolitical impacts of AI demand new levels of international policy coordination as domestic regulation is insufficient to address harmful uses, uneven development, and ethical risks. These are central to the type of arguments Pakistan should be making, being in a position where it is not only an AI user country but also one that requires participation in worldwide discussions around matters as digital sovereignty, development equity, cyber-norms and responsible innovation. AI-related foreign policy thus includes both; how diplomats use AI, and Pakistan's position on global governance of AI.

Yet, AI-powered diplomacy must not be seen as a replacement of human diplomatic instinct. Negotiation, persuasion, trust-building, cultural interpretation or crisis communication examples of political activities still deeply human. A more reasonable view is that AI can assist diplomats in making better, faster and pattern-recognition backed assessments but human expertise will still be needed to interpret evidence, determine values, allocate accountability and make final decisions. Such a distinction is especially relevant in states like Pakistan, where foreign policy decisions often run afoul of sensitive reduction-unfriendly security, identity, regional and religious questions: algorithms are unable to generate output that makes sense (Manor, 2026; UNESCO, 2022).

Digital Diplomacy and Pakistan

Digital Diplomacy in Pakistan forms the bedrock for AI-enabled foreign policy. Habibullah and Xiguang (2022) investigate the digital diplomacy and social media of Pakistan embassies, showing that networked public diplomacy is now the visible form of diplomatic communication. Ashraf (2023), addressing Pakistan likewise, discusses the promise and pitfalls of digital diplomacy concerning public outreach, transference of soft power, transparency transference, digital footprint and vulnerability. At all, these studies indicate that Pakistan already has digital diplomatic ground and AI-assisted tools can amplify this.

Digital diplomacy is more than just diplomats going through social media accounts. That is a wider transformation where diplomatic narratives, audiences, platforms, data analytics and reputational management are interwoven into statecraft. This domain is further improved with AI through sentiment analysis, misinformation detection, and multilingual communication (by mapping diaspora and also audience segmentation based on issues). Concomitantly, excessive dependence on algorithmic public diplomacy risks eroding authenticity, eliciting insensitive messaging or condensing sensitive diplomatic communication to resourcing conflicts with the whims of platform algorithms and hostile information operations (Ashraf, 2023; Habibullah & Xiguang, 2022).

Cyber Diplomacy, AI Governance and Digital Sovereignty

As cyber activity impinges on such core aspects of state: sovereignty, national security, trade, human rights and critical infrastructure, it renders state behavior in cyberspace a foreign-policy issue par excellence; Cyber Diplomacy! Abstract Cyber diplomacy is emerging as a crucial aspect of diplomatic relations and strategies formulated by nations to address the challenges posed by cyber environment and new technology. This tradeoff was undoubtedly amplified by applications of AI that have a dual purpose such as in cyber defense and cyber offense (automated vulnerability detection, influence operations, deepfakes, intrusion analysis and adversarial generative code).

This does mean that Pakistan also links with global expectations around AI governance. UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence has been hailed as a global standard in AI-related governance with emphasis on principles such as human rights, transparency fairness, oversight and accountability. These principles are not only domestic governance questions but become foreign-policy issues for Pakistan (and its credibility in multilateral forums) since global AI rules will impact trade, digital services, development financing and technology partnerships (UNESCO, 2022).

For developing countries, the question of digital sovereignty becomes even more critical. AI systems require the data and cloud infrastructure, semiconductor supply chains, access to models, cyber capacity, and regulatory standards that are frequently dominated by advanced economies (such as those of Western Europe or North America) and/or large technology firms. The competition will also shape Pakistan's foreign policy; how technology dependence constrains strategic autonomy, which cross-border data flows should be governed and what partnerships can be expanded without generating one-sided dependency (Feijoo et al., 2020; Government of Pakistan, 2025).

The Role of AI in National Security and Strategic Stability in South Asia

Large volumes of Pakistan-related AI literature exist on the high-profile topics of security and strategic stability. On AI as a potential threat to Pakistan and by extension South Asian national security, see: Roy & Reichberg (2024); for how AI and other emerging technologies influence Pakistan's general security environment, see Baig (2024). The studies underline that AI is not only a consumer-derived technology but also a dual-use strategic technology associated with surveillance, intelligence, autonomous systems, border management, cyber operations and military decision support.

South Asia stands out as a hot button region for military AI that is because, both India and Pakistan are adversarial nuclear powers with previously considerable experience of crises, low-intensity wars and now mistrust. Abbasi and Uzzaman (2022) have contended that AI-enabled weapon systems, decision-support tools, command-and-control applications and intelligence systems are likely to have implications for strategic stability in the region. Likewise, Arif (2019) cautions that South Asia may replicate AI trends that

instigate arms-race dynamics and upset the strategic equilibrium. According to Khurshid (2023), AI militarization can change the rules of deterrence between India and Pakistan.

These fears are corroborated in international studies of military AI. RAND refers to these risks as operational (reliability and fragility), ethical (escalation/safety) and strategic (proliferation). The volume from SIPRI on South Asian perspectives makes a similar observation that opens the door to concerns about arms-race behavior among rival nuclear-armed states, namely that machine will become an area of focus for human expansion through autonomy in command and control (C2) situations. These are especially important concerns for Pakistan's foreign policy, as crisis management, arms control, confidence-building measures and regional risk-reduction diplomacy may increasingly need to accommodate AI-enabled systems (Morgan et al., 2020; Topychkanov, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study has a qualitative documentary and strategy-analysis design. The design is right because the article does not examine a statistical relationship and instead interprets how a predominantly rapid and transformational scientific reality will likely impact institutions of foreign policy, strategic orientation, and diplomatic instruments within Pakistan. The last type of analysis, documentary analysis, is appropriate for synthesizing peer-reviewed studies (e.g., systematic reviews), official policy documents, and credible policy reports; while strategic analysis would be suitable to link technological change with state interests (foreign key variables such as competitive power over others which is conceivable considering risk assessment and providing options to policymakers) (Cafiero, 2023; Roy & Reichberg 2024).

Data Sources

Like all second order studies, the study is then based on four types of secondary material. First, it examines the scholarly literature on AI and global diplomacy — including studies of AI-enabled diplomacy, computational support for negotiations, and technology diplomacy. Second, it surveys literature focuses on Pakistan and digital diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, and national security. Third, it employs regional security studies on AI, South Asian strategic stability, and India-Pakistan deterrence. Fourth, it draws on official policy papers including Pakistan's Digital Pakistan Policy and the National Artificial Intelligence Policy as well as international standards for AI governance such as the UNESCO recommendation on ai ethics (Government of Pakistan, 2018, 2025; UNESCO, 2022).

Analytical Procedure

The analysis was performed in three stages. To begin with all the literature was organized into different thematic buckets AI diplomacy, digital diplomacy, cyber diplomacy, AI governance, economic diplomacy and strategic stability. Contributing factors, such as national security, international self-image, diaspora concerns, bilateral and multilateral issues, and economic competitiveness were analyzed for each of the categories in terms of how well these issues can help meet Pakistan's foreign-policy needs. Third, the results were structured by the two research objectives to establish process-related impacts, strategic opportunities and risks as well as institutional policy directions. This interpretation is strategic rather than partisan and concerns state capacity, diplomatic credibility, and responsible use of AI in a more long-term view (Feijoo et al., 2020; Mostafaei et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective 1: AI and the transformation of Pakistan's Foreign-Policy Process

Key insights for AI-Driven Foreign policy Formulation One of the major findings is that AI could totally disrupt how information is collected, how issues are monitored, how scenarios and situations are described, and decisions facilitated. The foreign policy of Pakistan working environment is volatile in such a manner that through cross-border incidents border and structured misinformation campaigns, regional instability commodity shocks, multi-dimensional geopolitical conflict spread climate disasters, public grievance or in Diaspora-based politics — or triggering global-level policy shifts anywhere around the world—all systems for crisis can come out. AI-enabled systems are to assist diplomats in processing large volumes of open-source data, identifying early-warning signals, mapping stakeholder relations, and comparing the potential policy impacts. When positioned as decision-support systems rather than substitutes for diplomatic judgment, these tools can expand the analytical bandwidth of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Cafiero 2023; Mostafaei et al. 2025).

And that collective memory can also be ameliorated through the use of AI. Foreign ministries are often reliant on cables, reports, archives, personal experience and country desks. AI systems algorithmically governed under the right conditions, might save time scanning through decades of country and policy positions that have been committed to in legal documents, summarize treaty obligations — both those enjoyed and expired, and compare voting patterns found by common multilateral fora: Recent examples are the IfG's covid-19 Genomics UK project and a host of (re)productive uses recently enabled by multi-modal models that can fill out text fields or format visual relationships for illumination — AI could help disentangle continuity from inconsistency in Pakistan's behavior." This would be especially beneficial for what is more and more a state harboring daily policy stresses throughout Afghanistan, India, China, the Gulf, the United States of America, the European Union in addition to multilateral organizations. However, the effectiveness of these kinds of systems relies on robust data structures, reliable archives, language accessibility and stringent restricted access (Government of Pakistan 2025; UNESCO 2022).

The second potential effect relates to the nature of diplomatic communication. From helping with multiple languages translations, briefing notes and summaries of the narratives appearing in Canadian-relevant international media markets to issue briefs and embassies responding faster to frequent enquiries. For such countries as face excessive challenges, consular affairs AI-enabled chatbots and case-triage systems could help offer better services for overseas Pakistanis willing to reach out. On a broader level, these affordances align with international empirical evidence on how AI can serve to operationalize pragmatic diplomatic roles whereby confidentiality, fidelity to information, accountability and human oversight must be guaranteed (Manor, 2026; Mostafaei et al., 2025).

The biggest risk is that foreign-policy institutions will feel able to use AI tools without proper governance. These AI systems reflect bias, generating spurious facts, exposing information considered sensitive (and also reminding us of that sneak problem the Probabilistic Programmers are still working on,) or providing a false confidence in unsure and ambiguous situations. It only takes the smallest fact error to create reputational cost or strategic misunderstanding in diplomacy. Hence, the Pakistani AI-enabled foreign-policy process should embrace human-in-loop decision making and source verification with audit trails coupled with classification protocols along clarity of accountability for the ultimate policy decisions (UNESCO 2022; Morgan et al., 2020).

Objective Two: Opportunities and threats: Strategic Challenges for Pakistan

Now coming to the second and larger point, Artificial Intelligence is a huge window of opportunity for both digital diplomacy and public diplomacy in Pakistan. Now it is for digital platforms used by Pakistan's embassies to be twice as good at the margins but that next stage must start with systematic audience analyses and those who are monitoring narratives—he meant influencers, systematic misinformation patterns and combatting while developing a diaspora. Using AI, one can track international media coverage of Pakistan, identify narratives against it that need to be countered in order for Pakistani fact checking to take place later on and generate multilingual content customized for specific targeted audiences. This is important because Pakistan's reputation internationally affects investment, tourism, international migratory responses and perception of Pakistan (especially concerning Kashmir), narratives around counter terror and indeed about geo-political anchor partnerships (Ashraf, 2023; Habibullah & Xiguang, 2022).

The risks of AI-supported public diplomacy Disinformation & Mistrust: Where deepfakes, automated propaganda, bot networks and synthetic media are degrading public trust in official communication. In the event of an urgent threat, external information ops could have an inter-country dimension, such as if Pakistan election campaigns bled over into the foreign-policy environment but then domestic political polarization too. Our problem is not merely technical, it is institutional—an effective response requires coordination among diplomats, cyber authorities, media regulators, fact-checkers, civil society actors and platform companies. However, excessive control that limits international credibility and net rights is what really matters; therefore, transparency and proportionality (Rehman & Wadood 2025; UNESCO 2022).

AI also affects economic diplomacy. Intelligence and outsourcing delivery are the way now as your days are Investment, IT Export and Technology Partners + Digital trade. Digital Pakistan Policy; National AI Policy (for domestic foundations of innovation, skills, public-sector transformation and knowledge-economy goals:) This calls for technological partnerships with China and the Gulf states, EU powers, the United States, Turkey, ASEAN partners as well as multilateral development organizations. AI Will Enable Economy by Investment Mapping, Market Sizing, Talent Diplomacy & Targeted Marketing of Pakistan digital services (Government of Pakistan 2025).

Structural income inequality will also confront economic diplomacy. Those countries which get out as well will be relatively better positioned with computation layers, data ecosystems, IP and Chip access. Unless Pakistan invests in developing capabilities to govern data, rapid research capacity building, development of cloud infrastructure and technically-savvy diplomats, it risks becoming a passive consumer of foreign AI systems rather than engaging as an active participant in setting global standards and driving economic value creation. Therefore, AI is a challenge as much about strategic autonomy then economic development (Feijoo et al., 2020; Government of Pakistan, 2019).

The security dimension is more sensitive. AI in defense has the potential to improve border surveillance, counter-terrorism analysis, maritime domain awareness, disaster response and cyber defense. Though military AI in South Asia may also be arms-racing and crisis destabilizing. Pakistan may be left with no option but to exercise its own capabilities, if India operates even quicker in an AI-enabled world of intelligence/ surveillance, autonomous systems or decision-support tools. This set of dynamics will tighten decision time, sow mistrust and make the control of escalation in a crisis more difficult (Abbasi & Uzzaman, 2022; Arif, 2019; Khurshid, 2023).

That means AI needs to be integrated into regional arms-control and risk-reduction diplomacy, with implications on Pakistan's foreign policy. Many traditional confidence-building measures focused on nuclear testing, missile notifications, hotlines and conventional crisis management. The AI age, on the other

hand, calls for more debates over autonomized hardware, escalatory cyber-AI strategies, false alarms or errors in decision-support algorithms, and indeed the relationship (if any) between human control systems and nuclear-related platforms. Both SIPRI's South Asian perspectives and RAND analysis on military AI risks signify that the adoption of technology without sufficient communication, testing norms, reliability standards, and escalation-control mechanisms can undermine strategic stability (Morgan et al., 2020; Topychkanov, 2020).

Institutional requirements emerging from the Two Objectives

One of the operational implications from these two research objectives is that Pakistan lacks an AI-driven foreign-policy framework connecting a domestic AI policy with external strategizing. While the National AI Policy creates a wider governmental foundation to adopt responsible AI, foreign policy lacks institutional structure. These consist of an AI and Digital Diplomacy Unit in the Foreign Office, encrypted data infrastructure to support diplomatic analysis, complimentary analytics training for diplomats, collaboration with universities and technology companies, as well as interagency responses to cyber and/or artificial intelligence (AI) accidents (Government of Pakistan 2025; Rehman & Wadood 2025).

This framework should start with a diplomatic capacity. Pakistan Diplomats in Pakistan will require knowledge of data interpretation, artificial intelligence (AI) governance, digital trade, cyber norms, platform politics as well as technology sanctions, export controls and misinformation analysis. That doesn't imply that each diplomat should be a computer scientist. It has implications for educating foreign-service officers because training must give diplomats an understanding of how to ask the right question, assess risks, negotiate agreements that involve AI, and avoid being too reliant on vendors or consultants (Cafiero 2023; Manor 2026).

Particularly, the framework should provide for multilateral AI governance. Pakistan, potentially, might avail itself of the boards like UN, UNESCO (– to address equity in AI capability developing countries) – OIC / SCO and South Asian sub-regional; regimes for 'responsible AI military while ensuring sovereignty through data protection arrangements with deepfakes cooperation. This way Pakistan not only escape the script of a reactive technology being diffused but can perform positive roles as a proactive norm-seller, especially in domains that other developing countries are grappling with, to wit digital inequality and algorithmic dependence (Feijoo et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2022).

The last of these components looks to strategic autonomy. That means Pakistan needs to generate a foreign policy based on AI also in such a way that it does not become dependent on one technological bloc. There are only a handful of states that will be primary technology partners (China); however, Pakistan needs to remain engaged with individual states and multilateral institutions in order to avoid the pathologies of technological lock-in. Net on the strategic autonomy front: balance of benefits from partnerships and reliance around data, supplier, time, labor/fund dependency etc., bolstering local research, upholding sovereign decision-making on critical systems. This is all the more critical in an age of export controls relating to AI, chip competition, cyber rivalry and conflicting regulatory frameworks (Roy & Reichberg, 2024; Government of Pakistan, 2025).

Table 1: Strategic Impact of AI on Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Foreign-policy domain	AI-enabled opportunity	Strategic risk	Suggested policy direction
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Diplomatic decision support	Early warning, scenario analysis, media monitoring, policy simulation, and institutional memory.	Algorithmic bias, data leaks, false confidence, and poor-quality outputs.	Create human-led AI protocols, secure archives, audit trails, and verification standards.
Digital public diplomacy	Audience mapping, multilingual messaging, diaspora engagement, sentiment analysis, and misinformation detection.	Deepfakes, bot amplification, reputational harm, and loss of authentic voice.	Develop an AI-assisted public diplomacy cell with transparent fact-checking and crisis communication rules.
Cyber diplomacy	AI-enabled cyber defense, international cooperation, and cyber incident analysis.	Automated cyber operations, attribution problems, and escalation ambiguity.	Strengthen cyber diplomacy, international reporting channels, and digital confidence-building measures.
Economic diplomacy	Investment mapping, IT export promotion, digital trade analysis, and talent partnerships.	Technological dependency, exclusion from AI value chains, and data-governance weakness.	Diversify technology partnerships and connect AI policy with trade missions and investment promotion.
Regional security	Crisis monitoring, counterterrorism analysis, disaster response, and border awareness.	AI arms-race dynamics, compressed decision time, and strategic instability.	Promote regional risk-reduction talks on military AI, autonomous systems, and human control.
Multilateral engagement	Participation in AI ethics, safety, development, and standard-setting debates.	Norms may be shaped without Pakistan or against developing-country interests.	Build AI governance expertise and coordinate positions in UN, UNESCO, OIC, SCO, and other forums.

Note. The table presents AI as a cross-cutting strategic variable rather than a single-sector technology.

Cross-Cutting Strategic Patterns

From the analysis of personal narratives, however, several cross-cutting patterns emerge. AI A Solution to Pakistan's Evolving Foreign Policy The one-element balkanization of foreign policy does not pertain only to the Pakistanis; it is widespread in the context of AI. An actor engaging with AI links diplomacy, security, economy, public communication and governance, all divisions coming together. A disjointed approach would thus erode national capacity. Second, AI raises the prices of information as properly because it mounts the value of incorrect information. If a system of foreign-policy reasoning is unable to validate data, we open ourselves up not only to the possibility of technological error but also malicious interference (Mostafaei et al., 2025; UNESCO, 2022).

Third, AI makes the links between domestic governance and external credibility tighter. If domestic practices mirror transparency, accountability and rights-based governance at home to a wider extent, Pakistan's international stance with regard to AI ethics, digital rights data protection and cyber norms will

gain far greater credibility. Countries are further being evaluated by foreign investors, development partners, diasporas and multilateral institutions in terms of the level of digital trust they hold; regulatory quality and cyber resilience (Government of Pakistan 2025; Rehman & Wadood 2025).

Fourth, AI strengthens the imperative for solution-centered crisis communication. For instance, the friction created if a synthetic media or false-flag cyber activity were enacted, or an algorithmic misinterpretation of information overcame public patience could produce rapid pressure on decision and reduce time to take action. As such, Pakistan's crisis diplomacy must focus on and design pre-emptive communication clearinghouses, verification outposts that can deliver rapid results and well-defined chains to have official statements released. Reducing such threats will have to be a target; preventing misinformation from setting off military or diplomatic escalation (Abbasi & Uzzaman, 2022; Morgan et al., 2020; Topychkanov, 2020).

Finally, the AI does both on dependency and agency. Pakistan is dependent on AI infrastructure and development centered elsewhere in the world, however it can still exercise agency through appropriate regulation, aligning with like-minded actors, cultivating local talent and engaging its diaspora, as well as pursuing public-private partnership strategies to become competitive on the international stage in certain domain areas. As per the synthesis of the relevant strategic question, Pakistan will not be even able to compress the competition with advanced powers in terms of artificial intelligence capacity (AI-cc) but whether and how Pakistan can avoid using existing capacity while defending national interests from overt threats without incurring additional tactical risks through irresponsible technological escalatory behavior itself (Feijoo et al., 2020; Roy & Reichberg, 2024).

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The first policy recommendation is to create an AI and Digital Diplomacy Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Your framework should not be some kind of technical desk (with a role at the far end of technocracy). It ought to create bandwidth for practices like foreign-policy analysis, misinformation tracking, digital open diplomacy, negotiations about AI regulation and economic diplomatic and consular innovations.

It needs to collaborate with national cyber authorities, Ministry of IT and Telecommunication, universities, and the private sector while upholding stringent data-security taboos (Government of Pakistan, 2025; Rehman & Wadood, 2025).

Second, we should revise foreign-service training. Instead, diplomatic academies and training institutions should incorporate courses dedicated to AI literacy, cyber diplomacy, data protection in the digital space, price of digital trade relations between nations, technology sanctions and export control policies for dual-use technology practitioners, algorithmic bias together with digital geopolitics dynamics accompanying AI adoption patterns by nation-states; ethics in AI development and crisis communication strategies to manage public messaging during circumstances where enemies utilize misinformation campaigns in dynamic information environments. It should involve practical training, based on case studies such as deepfakes, consular automation, UN debates about AI governance (Cafiero, 2023), crisis escalation in South Asia and which diplomacy in the digital economy (Manor, 2026).

Thirdly, Pakistan should prepare its artificial-intelligence empowered public diplomacy strategy. This strategy must incorporate multilingual content support, an engagement dashboard for diaspora outreach, issue-based media monitoring and reply to misinformation capacity building as well as ethical guidelines on AI-generated messaging. AI writing: Credibility in diplomacy is always about accurate content and

targeting the right cultural groups (Ashraf, 2023; Habibullah & Xiguang, 2022; UNESCO 2022), so all communications by design must include human insight review.

Fourth, Pakistan should globalize responsible military AI and crisis stability. While navigating the current status of formal India-Pakistan dialogue is challenging, Track-II platforms, engagements with strategic experts and multilateral forums can set us onto defining risk-reduction principles around AI-enabled military systems. These include subjecting autonomous nuclear decision-making to human control and refrainment, the communication of cyber incidents, and clarity on doctrines where feasible (Abbasi & Uzzaman 2022, Khurshid 2023; Topychkanov 2020).

Fifth, develop an economic diplomacy with a view on AI preparedness. Pakistani missions abroad, for their part, should help identify investment opportunities in Pakistan relating to AI, position the country as an attractive destination for tech exports globally, actively search out global partnerships around scholarships and training; and assist fledgling local tech startups looking to take their businesses international. This would have created an interlinkage between foreign policy and national development including shrinking the vast divide between digital aspiration and Pakistan's economic position at international level (Government of Pakistan 2018, 2025).

Sixth, Pakistan should play an important role in global AI governance. Pakistan needs to move from merely consuming norms being created at a distance, to carving out opinions and positions on AI ethics, data sovereignty, fair access to AI capacity, deter-fake deep fake collaboration, through cyber slots and military-use responsible AI. Secondly, it has to cooperate with other developing countries in order to avoid that global AI governance continues to replicate digital inequality or neglect states where computation capacity is limited (Feijoo et al., 2020; UNESCO, 2022).

CONCLUSION

AI is steadily emerging as a strategic driver in Pakistan's Foreign Policy/A-1/, especially how the state collects and processes information, interacts with foreign public audiences, protects digital sovereignty, pursues economic diplomacy, prepares for cyber threats and mitigates the potential pitfalls of regional security dynamics/P-2/. This article has established that AI should not just be seen as a technical tool. A diplomatic tool, a security challenge, an economic opportunity, or a governance issue (Manor 2026; Mostafaei et al. 2025)

It is not beyond the realms of possibility for Pakistan. These can also help to enhance public diplomacy and consular services, facilitate the mapping of investment opportunities, strengthen diplomatic foresight, and accelerate policymakers' reactions to international events. But the threats are also serious. An avalanche of algorithmic reliance, misinformation, data vulnerability, cyber escalation effects with strategic instability and governance weakness threatens the credibility of diplomacy and national security. These risks in South Asia are especially fraught since India-Pakistan crises occur within a context filled with mutual distaste and public pressures (Abbasi & Uzzaman, 2022; Roy & Reichberg, 2024).

Final recommendations are provided for an overall integrated foreign-policy strategy for Pakistan based on leveraging AI-enabled approaches. Such an approach should combine domestic AI policy with foreign outreach, enhance diplomatic tech capacity, protect human agency, safeguard data and rights, diversify technology partners, and support regional risk-reduction measures. But AI can only serve as Pakistan's pillar of diplomatic power when paired with responsible governance, institutional coordination and ethics and a rational strategy. In the absence of these conditions, AI will deepen instead of improving foreign-policy performance (Government of Pakistan 2025; UNESCO 2022).

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