Quarterly Round Up

Muhammad Bazaid Khan*

US Withdrawal from the Paris Agreement

On January 20, 2015, President Donald Trump signed an executive order withdrawing the United States from the Paris Agreement. This withdrawal affects all agreements, conventions, and similar commitments made under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This decision is part of a plan to position the United States at the forefront of international environmental agreements and will limit the United States' financial contribution to other countries for the fight against climate change. The United States' withdrawal order will immediately cease or terminate all financial obligations under UNFCCC. At the same time, President Donald Trump has also terminated the International Climate Finance Initiative, initiated by Former President Joe Biden, which was designed to help developing countries combat the effects of climate change through multilateral and bilateral institutions. In addition, the United States' withdrawal from the Paris Agreement will affect the participation and contributions of other countries in the negotiations, as well as the implementation of international climate law. This withdrawal will also have repercussions on climate law and policy in the United States and other countries. This order was made with the express purpose of restoring US dominance in the energy sector; the withdrawal order was therefore enacted to reduce the burden on energy production and consumption.

Israel's West Bank Settlements

The UN human rights office said that Israel's expansion and consolidation of settlements in the West Bank is a war crime and a breach of international law. A report covering November 2023 to October 2024 highlighted the acts of Israel in making tens of thousands of houses in East Jerusalem, to make it the territory of Israel. UN rights chief Volker Turk asked Israel to stop these settlement activities and evacuate all the settlers

* M. Phil Scholar, National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quadi-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

by readdressing the act. He added that moving Israelis into occupied territory is a war crime and will be a systematic discrimination against Palestinians. This growing settlement activity has raised the fears of invasion and is alarming, as Israel has withdrawn from cooperation with the UN Human Rights Council.

Munich Security Conference

The 61st Munich Security Conference concluded after three days, it included 50 heads of state and 150 ministers, with high-level discussions on European security, the Ukraine war, and the Middle East. In this, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that peace talks with Russia without the involvement of Ukraine will have no impact, while German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte focused on Europe's central role in any future peace talks. On the other hand, US Vice President JD Vance criticized Europe for its security and European migration policies and asked Europe to work more in these fields. Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan held several bilateral talks with different countries officials including the US, Ukraine, Jordan, and Syria. In this, he addressed Türkiye's peace efforts in Syria, Gaza, and the region. European leaders of countries including Spain, Ireland, and Malta supported the Gaza ceasefire. The conference also highlighted the future of Europe and asked for steady EU accession for Balkan countries with improved competitiveness. Finland’s President Alexander Stubb strongly supported Ukraine, while Canada said that they are against the Russian rejoining of the G7.

President Erdogan’s Visit to Pakistan

The Turkish President paid a two-day visit to Pakistan on 12-13 February 2025 at the invitation of Pakistani Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif. The seventh session of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) between Pakistan and Türkiye, held in Islamabad under the joint chairmanship of President Erdoğan and Prime Minister Sharif, focused on strengthening and expanding bilateral cooperation. Twenty-four documents and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between the two countries. These included Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the Ministries of National Defense of Pakistan and

Türkiye, and between Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI), a Turkish state-owned company, and the Pakistan Marine Research and Development Institute. In addition, the High-Level Strategic Council established a new Permanent Joint Council on Security, Defense, and Intelligence to strengthen security cooperation between the two countries. Türkiye and Pakistan also agreed to expand the existing trade agreement from 1.4 billion US dollars to 5 billion US dollars, significantly increasing bilateral trade. The Prime Minister of Pakistan announced that Turkish companies would establish special economic zones for industrial production in Pakistan. A Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in mining was also signed, which strengthened Pakistan's efforts to attract foreign investment in this sector. President Erdoğan expressed his solidarity with the Palestinian and Kashmiri people, a sentiment echoed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Fire in Los Angeles

The wildfires that broke out on January 7, 2025, in Eaton and Palisades counties in Los Angeles County, Southern California, have destroyed more than 10,000 homes, making them the deadliest wildfires in the history of the second-largest city in the United States. Damage is estimated to be in the hundreds of billions of dollars. The cause of the fires is still under investigation, but climate change is believed to be a major factor in their rapid spread. Many residents were forced to leave their homes as the flames raged for more than three weeks, destroying infrastructure. Firefighters worked tirelessly to contain the flames, and after several days of hard work, the flames were finally brought under control. The mayor of Los Angeles said relief efforts were underway to help residents return to their homes as quickly and safely as possible.

Beijing and Musk Discuss Business Ties

Chinese Vice President Han Zheng met with Tesla CEO Elon Musk and other American business leaders; he encouraged them to expand economic cooperation with China. The meeting took place in Beijing before the planned visit of Han at the inauguration of the US elected President Donald Trump. According to Chinese state media Xinhua, Han asked US companies to invest further in China to strengthen US-China

trade relations. In response, Musk said that Tesla will invest in China and would play an active role in economic cooperation. To some extent, China is very important for Tesla because it has a big factory there. Even though many Chinese car companies are growing fast, Tesla is still popular and strong in the market.

World Tent Pegging Championship 2025

Equestrian Federation of Pakistan (EFP) organised the World Tent Pegging Championship 2025 under the supervision of the International Tent Pegging Federation at Lahore, Pakistan, from 10th to 12th February. The championship was held over three days, and nine countries, including Egypt, Kuwait, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the United States of America, and Pakistan, participated and showed their skills. In the presence of Sheikh Mohammed Al-Fayrouz, President of ITPF, Sahibzada Sultan Muhammad Ali, President of EFP, along with several military officers, officials from Lahore, delegation heads from the participating countries, and ambassadors from different countries also attended. All the international principles of tent pegging were being followed in this championship. Pakistan secured the first position, Egypt got second, and Saudi Arabia secured the third position.