China-Pakistan strategic relations in the post-Cold War era remain as one of the most serious challenges in the sub-continent. This is so because transfers of sensitive and dangerous technologies and other related materials are transferred by China to Pakistan. China-Pakistan strategic relationship also remains inconclusive as it is guided by several factors. First, their convergence of interest is guided by India factor. China sees that a strong India is detrimental to its interest in the region and in order to check this China use Pakistan as a proxy to limit India’s influence in South Asia only. In addition, China also follows its policy of encirclement with the other neighbouring countries of India. Second, China with huge energy demand seeks to develop cordial relationship with the energy-rich Islamic countries in the Middle East, to which Pakistan is a gateway. Lastly, China ensures that Pakistan’s defence posture is not compromised.

China-Pakistan strategic relationship had defied all challenges and earned the distinction of being the most trusted and enduring relationship. However, recent revelation about their relationship shows that number of irritants began to impinge in their relationship. To mention some of the few, it includes – the nuclear proliferation issue, the terrorism factor, and the growing China-India equation. China, eventhough, being a party to various arms control regimes, assists missile and nuclear related technology to Pakistan that raise concern worldwide. Faced with resentment from various angles China began to follow restrictive approach in dealing with such issue. About the terrorism factor, China is concern about the restive Muslim separatism in China’s own Xinjiang province. The fear also emanates due to the links between the separatist and the Islamic fundamentalist across the borders.

Despite the thawing of relations between India and China and India and Pakistan in recent years. China still continues to supply missile and nuclear technology to Pakistan. In fact, nearly one-third of Pakistan’s conventional weapons were provided by China.
The structural classification of this study generally is on the basis of its necessity and relevance. The whole study is divided into six Chapters. Chapter-1, (Introduction) deals about China-Pakistan relations during the Cold-War period, how their relationship got nurtured into enduring relationship. This chapter also takes into account various trends shaped by the Cold War politics. The second chapter deals with the opportunity and challenges in China-Pakistan relations but in a strategic context, keeping in mind different factors responsible for their convergence and divergence. Chapter-3 deals with the conventional relationship. Here the major focus is on the kinds and types of conventional weapons transferred by China to Pakistan. Chapter-4 deals with the most complex issues underlying Sino-Pakistan relationship, i.e. the missile and nuclear issue. Chapter-5 deals with the ‘terrorism’ factor in China-Pakistan relationship. It also explains about how China looks towards Pakistan under such issues. The last chapter analyses different findings in China-Pakistan strategic relationship in the post-Cold War era.

I must acknowledge in advance the fact which readers might be critical about in this thesis – more often same trends and events are mentioned repeatedly in different chapters owing to its genuine necessity and overriding importance. However, the issues discussed at one point also correlate with other issues, thereby bound to recur the same in many other contexts.

The present study, “China-Pakistan Strategic Relations in the Post-Cold War Era” is an attempt to analyse the aforesaid issues in great detail and make an assessment of their convergence and divergence in their strategic relationship.