

## LEXICAL FUNCTIONS AND COHESION IN IMRAN KHAN'S SPEECH ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores, investigates, and analyzes the lexical functions and cohesion in Imran Khan's speech on September 28, 2019, at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The purpose of this paper is to analyze the significance of functions of cohesive lexical devices and to highlight the various kinds of lexical cohesive devices used in the discourse through analyzing the speech of Imran Khan, depending on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) classifications of lexical cohesion; reiteration, collocation and language functions. These lexical devices and language functions emphasize feelings, expressions for purpose of clarification. Repetition stresses the speakers' ideas. At each use of these devices, there is a specific purpose. The reader can reach such purpose by using his/her knowledge of the world, which is related to this particular topic of discourse. The secondary data were used in this study. The data were collected from the website in the form of a transcription of the speech text. The study is qualitative. Only one speech of Imran Khan is selected. The findings reveal that these lexical cohesive devices have discourse value, which enables them to function as means of interaction aimed at influencing the international community.

**Disciplinary:** Multidisciplinary (Linguistics (Speech Analysis), History, International Relations, Global Politics, Religion and Belief).

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Speech is one form of communication activity or given thinking of mind for people that are very necessary for everyday life. A good speech is that the listener can understand a word address very well. This study explores the lexical functions and cohesion in Imran Khan's maiden speech

delivered at the United Nations General Assembly. That was the historical speech of Imran Khan in which he mentions the core issues. Imran Khan delivered his speech on September 28, 2019. He discussed four major aspects of his speech, i.e., changing climate, money laundering, Islamophobia, and the Kashmir issue. There are at least two factors that influence the speech text, cohesion, and coherence. Cohesion is the relationship between sentence and between clauses in text, either in the grammatical phase and lexical phase. There is an association of meaning of speech in discourse or meanings in a text and it is linked through coherence. Carter (1998) elaborates on the term cohesion “how texts are linguistically connected”. This connectivity of clauses and sentences forms the cohesion of a text (Gutwinski, 2011).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) describe that cohesion centers the way in which the meaning of elements is construed. In specific terms, cohesion takes place where the interpretation of an item in the discourse is facilitated by the presence of another item. Predominately, cohesion is the set of “non-structural text-forming” relations. Woods (2006) argued that cohesion is defined as a set of explicit linguistic associating with devices that serve to reveal how various parts of a text are related to each other to give the text its structure and texture. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) classified five cohesive devices, four are grammatical and one is lexical. Following reference, ellipsis, substitution, and conjunction are grammatical cohesive devices that operate within the grammatical zone of lexico-grammar. However, lexical cohesion, as the term implies, works within lexis. Mirzapour and Ahmadi (2011) illustrate that “cohesion can be seen as residing in the semantic and grammatical properties of the language”.

## 1.1 ASSOCIATION OF COHESION AND COHERENCE

It is not so easy to define and differentiate both the terms comprehensively. Both terms have different perspectives. Čarapić (2006) argues that cohesion is the connectedness that entails manifestations in the discourse. On the contrary, coherence is realized by connectedness that is based on knowledge outside the discourse. There is a distinction that is described by Bex (1996), who contemplates that coherence is “the covert meaning relationship among parts of a text” that is made overt by readers or listeners. So, cohesion is regarded as an “overt relationship holding between the parts of the text, expressed by language-specific markers.” Still, in the same field, contextual unity is maintained by coherence, and co-textual unity is created by cohesion (Wilcox & Zuckerman, 2019). Coherence, as presented by Halliday & Hasan (1976), brings up issues about the connection between cohesive devices and textual coherence. These issues, unlike cohesion, are outside the text such as scripts (pre-existing knowledge on how to structure the sequencing of events), speech events, and rhetorical organization and maintaining the topic. Although cohesion and coherence seem to be different from each other, but they have some common features; both are evolving around meaning. Moreover, they have the functional property of merging the text segments to create a unified whole. Even though it is typically conceivable to recognize cohesive and coherent devices, this can now and again be troublesome. In any case, since they have the same work (that of making texts); it is not generally important to recognize them. They are formally instead of functionally opposite, and thus it will think of them as together here.

Cohesive ties are the exhibit of semantic relations that frame the reason for attachment between the messages of a text. Halliday & Hasan (1976) take note of the idea of cohesion makes it conceivable to break down a text as far as its cohesion properties, and it gives a methodical record of its examples and surface. Moreover, the numbers and kinds of explicit devices used will point out the

quality of the text, since such numbers and kinds underlie functional relations which are also incorporated in the model of discourse structure. Cohesive ties can be shown in the types of reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Therefore, the researcher will provide much detail about these ties by integrating Halliday & Hasan's (1976) model of cohesion selecting the lexical cohesion in terms of Imran Khan's speech at UNGA.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of lexical cohesion can be elucidated from different angles. Lexical cohesion is elaborately defined as the set of relationships between open-class items, more specifically, the relations between the content words. When this cohesive dimension is troubled, deriving meaning from a piece of language appears to be difficult (Eggins, 2004). Similarly, (Bloor & Bloor, 2013) point out that lexical cohesion implies the “cohesive effect” that lexical elements have in the discourse where the selection of an element is related to the selections which have gone before. To put it in another way, lexical cohesion is a way of achieving cohesion either by repeating the same word or phrase or using chains of related words that contribute to the continuity of lexical meaning (Baker & Ellece, 2011).

Lexical cohesion undoubtedly plays a salient role in deciding the coherence and readability of a text. McCarthy (1991) portrays lexical cohesion as to how words give the text a logical structure that leads to creating understanding. Giving it a more central role Hoey (1991) regards lexical cohesion as the cohesive device that “regularly forms multiple relationships.” Consequently, lexical cohesion is considered the dominant mode of creating texture. Based on Hoey's (1991) opinion, the study of the greater part of cohesion is attributed to the study of patterns of lexis in the texts. In a nutshell, the function of lexical cohesion is indicated by the role that certain basic semantic relations play in forming textuality (McCarthy, 1991). In addition to its cohesive function by tying the text together, lexical cohesion can be manipulated to cause a stylistic effect. In specific terms, lexical cohesion can create variation by substituting one content word for another. Further, this relexicalization leads to the naturalness of the text. Accordingly, the style of the text can be improved by such an elegant variation (Harwood, 2010). From another perspective, Baker and Ellece (2011) consider that the resources of lexical cohesion indicate how speakers and writers employ lexical items to make the text consistently related to their field.

To characterize the features of such a cohesive type, it has to be differentiated from the grammatical cohesion. In general, Halliday and Hasan (1976) clarify that the difference between the two cohesive kinds is “one of degree”. Lexical cohesion can be considerably distinguished from grammatical cohesive devices in certain respects. With the grammatical cohesion, the effect seems to be clearer. Noticeably, Tanskanen (2000) and (Hoffmann, 2012) elaborate that grammatical forms of cohesion play a less prominent cohesive role than lexical ones because cohesive connectivity within lexical cohesion does not necessarily precede the regular conceptual interpretation of the cohesive items. Moreover, lexical links are considered more important than grammatical ones because vocabulary items contribute to cohesion and coherence in many ways. In this regard, they constitute lexical fields and establish semantic relationships. Most significantly, they can activate larger text patterns, therefore imposing structure on a whole text (Gramley & Pätzold, 2004). However, it is easy to specify grammatical cohesion since it is concerned with a finite number of grammatical words.

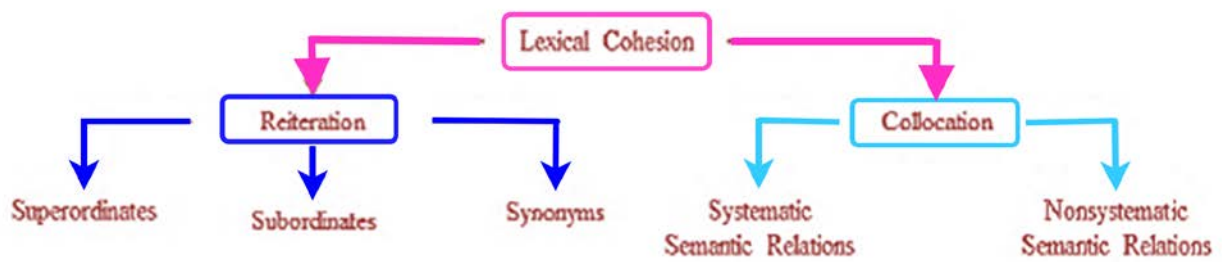
Lexical cohesion, on the other hand, is classified as the most problematic category of cohesion because it deals with open rather than closed-class items. At this juncture, there is an unlimited number of open-class words (Carter, 2012).

Lexicon and Knowledge about all aspects of vocabularies are essential devices to understand the message in the communication process. Aspects such as word-formation, diachronic development of words, the current meaning of a word, and most important, is the relation between words in meaning and the entrance of words and how they are tackled in dictionaries, are all important issues in the process of creating meaning which is necessary to be understood by speakers and readers (Crystal, 1995). The undertaking of vocabularies to decide meaning in different discourse types and registers leads scholars to think about lexical cohesion. Halliday and Hasan (1976) note on the one hand, that cohesion occurs when the elucidation of some elements is dependent on that of another, on the other hand, present that lexical cohesion in texts occurs through the repetition of some items and complex relation of collocation.

McCarthy (1991) defines lexical cohesion as "the cohesion that arises from semantic relationships between words". According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are five types of lexical cohesive ties that are commonly occurred in text and are accounted for repetition with its sub-classification and collocation. The cohesive devices that are investigated in this paper are the ones that are not only related by their relatedness with each other in the linguistic system but also according to their relatedness "in the context of the related lexical items that provide cohesion and [give] to the passage the quality of text" (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) view the text as a "unified whole rather than a collection of unrelated sentences". They consider cohesion as non-structural relations over the sentence, as part of the textual component in the semantic framework. Inside the Functional Grammar Theory Structure, the semantic framework is one of three levels that constitute the linguistic framework: semantic, lexico-grammatical, and phonological (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Three noteworthy practical parts of meaning are associated inside the semantic framework and are figured out: the ideational meaning, the interpersonal meaning, and the textual meaning (Michael Halliday et al., 2014). While the ideational part is "concerned with the expression of content", the interpersonal is concerned with the social and expressive capacity of language, i.e., the speaker/author's states of mind and judgments. The textual meaning is the 'text forming' of language that represents the surface structure of the text (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Inside the textual component, cohesion assumes a unique part in the making of content by communicating coherence between one part in the text and another.

Coherence, as presented by (Halliday & Hasan, 1976), brings up issues about the connection between cohesive devices and textual coherence. These issues, unlike cohesion, are outside the text such as scripts (pre-existing knowledge on how to structure the sequencing of events), speech events, and rhetorical organization and maintaining the topic. Although cohesion and coherence seem to be different from each other, they have some common features; both are evolving around meaning. Moreover, they have the functional property of merging the text segments to create a unified whole. Although it is typically conceivable to recognize cohesive and coherent devices, this can now and again be troublesome. In any case, since they have the same work (that of making texts); it is not generally important to recognize them. They are formally instead of functionally opposite, and thus it will think of them as together here.



**Figure 1:** Lexical cohesion model (source: Sirithumgul and Olfman, 2013).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) recommended two major types of lexical cohesion, i.e., reiteration and collocation. They further describe that lexical cohesion means sentences, topics, or phrases, each of which can be categorized by meanings or the association of meanings. Reiteration and collocation cohesion can be categorized into sub-cohesion as displayed in Figure 1.

The research question is based on the gap of the previous studies, that how does lexical cohesion play a role in Imran Khan’s speech delivered at UNGA? Thus, this study explores the function of lexical cohesion in the speech of Imran Khan at UNGA, i.e., to recognize the lexical features of Imran Khan’s speech, and to analyze the function of the lexical features of the speech.

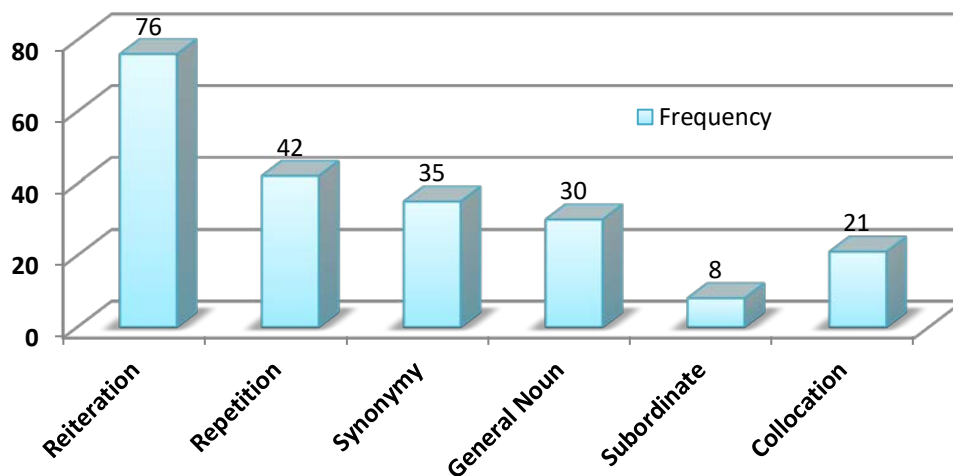
### 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Based on the qualitative method, this research is analyzed with the descriptive method to describe the lexical cohesion devices with cohesion in Imran Khan’s speech. The secondary data were also used. The speech text is downloaded from i.e., <http://www.brecorder.com/2019/09/27/524851/full-transcript-of-prime-minister-imran-khans-speech-at-the-unga>. The speech of Imran Khan was analyzed in terms of lexical cohesion in tables and graphs. Only one speech is selected that was delivered at the United Nations General Assembly on September 28, 2019. In analyzing Imran Khan’s speech, the researcher focused on lexical cohesion devices and types of associative meaning. Furthermore, the findings that have been completed and classified into several types, it is then, to be interpreted. The following are the lexical cohesion devices, i.e., reiteration (repetition, synonym, near-synonym, superordinate) and collocation.

### 4 DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Table 1 summarizes the results of the lexical cohesive devices and their frequency in the analyzed data.

The results of the analyzed data reveal that there are 210 recurrences of lexical cohesion (Reiteration & Collocation). Among lexical cohesive devices of reiteration type, the most frequently used devices are repetition repetitive devices. Repetition is the most prolific form that is used to stress the speaker's ideas. There are 78 recurrences for repetitive devices. Imran Khan through his repetition of some words, phrases, and sentences tries to introduce some form of authenticity and emphasis to the most pressing and burning issues to make it vivid and efficient before the world leaders. However, repetition is a useful factor to help to achieve his goal. The repetitive items are seen once preceded with the definite article and another without.



**Figure 2: Types and Frequency of Lexical Cohesion.**

The same reference is repeated over and over to make the discourse coherent. Moreover, repetition in the discourse is directed to add discursual value functions at influencing the nation and achieving particular purposes. For example, the repetition of Imran Khan's first aspect of climate change, brought attention to the whole world and the second aspect was money laundering, third was Islamophobia, and finally, he discussed the Kashmir issue. This lexical cohesive device of repetition can help in conveying Imran Khan's feelings and create the spirit of enthusiasm to aware of the core issues from its reality to the world. It helps the Imran Khan to focus attention and give high value to those aspects that are neglectable in the eyes of the world.

The next lexical cohesive device of reiteration that was employed in the discourse is synonymy. Synonymous types rate 34 occurrences. They are used to extend the discourse with efficient ideas. Each synonymy used adds a new sense that has at its bases of implications. Imran Khan tries to make the world leaders accounted for the ideas and subject matter through the use of this device. Synonyms take different word classes in the analyzed discourse.

The afterward reiteration type is the general noun. It appears in 28 recurrences to come among reiteration types. The generalized meaning of a set of noun classes is employed in this discourse, such as human beings. Imran Khan uses the nouns like Muslims many times and the Western World. He also mentioned the name of Modi several times as a terrorist.

Imran Khan used referents in his speech. The use of the full form of referents instead of their pro-forms indicates the new concepts in the text and that these referents are in the focus of attention. Halliday and Hasan (1976) state the difference between using the generalized reference of the class of the general noun and the use of the anaphoric reference is that "the form with a general noun, the man, opens up another possibility, that of introducing an interpersonal element into the meaning, which is absent in the case of the personal pronoun". Hence the lexical devices of the general noun are of interest in the discourse as they appear in their occurrence in the analyzed text.

Also, the text contains some cohesive links through the use of subordinate devices. There are (8) instances of subordinate forms. For example, came to this forum is a subordinate form since its meaning is included in the existence of Imran Khan before the leaders of the world. A hierarchical semantic relationship also found between the role of the form of United Nations leaders (subordinates) and 'people' (superordinate). The words 'duty, country, and God' are subordinate forms which included in the meaning of the superordinate phrase.

**Table 1: The description of the functions of language:**

Function	Examples
Instrumental	"I want to ..." "And this is where I want the United Nations to take the lead in invoking this will..." "Most important thing I want to say, to explain this Islamophobia, I've played cricket in the West & I know how the western mind works. One of the reasons for Islamophobia; in 1989 this book was published maligning, ridiculing our Prophet (PBUH) ". "Now I want to move on to talk about Kashmir. When we came into power, my priority was that Pakistan would be that country that would try its best to bring peace".
Personal	"I stand here at this forum of world leaders where we have a chance to discuss the problems the world is facing." "I especially came to this forum despite a difficult time in my country; facing challenges..." "I would not have come..." "I don't see world leaders realizing..." "I took charge of our government a year back..." "I've played cricket in the West & I know how the western mind works..." "I blame some people in the West who provoked Muslims..." "I would say and educate the world about Islam..." "I want to move on to talk about Kashmir..." "I know that India keeps saying we have militant organizations." "I invite UN observers..." "I told India to give us any proof..." "I have to explain what the RSS is..." "I picture myself in Kashmir..." "I feel we are back in 1939 Munich..." "I am not threatening here..."
Interactional	"We have a lot of ideas, but as they say, ideas without funding are mere hallucinations..." "Mr. President; every year billions of dollars leave poor countries & go to rich countries..." "The rich countries must show political will; they cannot allow this flight of capital from poor countries through corruption..." "In western society, the holocaust is treated with sensitivity because it hurts the Jewish community..." "No Pakistani was involved in 9/11..." "Instead of sharing proofs of any Pakistani's alleged involvement in Pulwama attack; they tried to bomb us..." "Mr. President; I have to explain what the RSS is. Mr. Modi is a life member" of RSS..." "What I know of the west, they wouldn't stand for 8 million animals to be locked up..."
Regulatory	"The Prophet (PBUH) announced that one of the greatest deeds is to free a slave. But if you have to; treat them as an equal member of the family..." "You can all just Google the founding fathers of the RSS like Golwalkar. This ideology of hate murdered Mahatma Gandhi..." "You think Kashmiris will accept a new status quo under revocation of Article 370..." "Don't you think that 180 Million Muslims will be radicalized in India..." "If you are doing this to human beings, pushing them, you are leading to radicalization..." "Either you surrender, or you fight till the end". "You are the one who said Kashmir right to self-determination".
Representational	"I'll tell you." "I know." "I would say and educate the world about Islam..." "I know that India keeps saying we have militant organizations." "I want to move on to talk about Kashmir..." "I feel we are back in 1939, Munich..." "I am not threatening here..."
Heuristic	"Why is it legal to have tax havens where you have these secret accounts"?" "And why has this happened' because certain western leaders equated Islam with terrorism". "Why is there Islamophobia' How will an average American differentiate between a moderate Muslim and a radical Muslim' this has nothing to do with our religion". "What is radical Islam' There is only ONE Islam and that is the Islam of Prophet (PBUH) ". "The west could not understand what the problem was. They don't look at religion the way that we do". "Why would we ever want to disrupt peace' But it is because there is no other narrative left for India. There will be another Pulwama incident because of their cruelty in Kashmir, they will blame us and try to bomb us again". "Mr. President, I have to explain what the RSS is. Mr. Modi is a life member" of RSS" "What kind of a mind-set locks up 8 million people' Women, children, sick people", "What will happen when the curfew is lifted' Modi says this is done for the prosperity of Kashmir". "And this is why the UN has a responsibility. This is why you came into being in 1945!" "And what about 1.3 billion Muslims who are watching this knowing that this is only happening to Kashmiri Muslims" "What has been the response of the world community on any atrocities in the Muslim world".
Imaginative	"First let me talk about climate change ..." "I blame some people in the West who provoked Muslims. But this is where the majority of the Muslim leaders let the Muslim community down..." "And then India; let me tell you my relationship with India. Because of cricket, which is followed with great passion in the subcontinent..." "So my first move was to reach out to Modi & I said let's work our differences, leave our past behind & our main priority should be our people as we have similar problems; poverty & climate change. The highest number of people reside in the subcontinent".

Through these forms of subordinate, Imran Khan tries to urge the world that it is time to wake now and to take action; he is also trying to provide them with the spirit of enthusiasm. The word 'people' in '...all for our people' is a subordinate form of the superordinate 'country'. The second type of lexical cohesion is collocation. Collocation shows 21 occurrences. They are as presented in the discourse above, create a more dynamic and comprehensive discourse which resulted from the concurrence of the lexical items employed in the text such as the occurrence, recurrence, and co-occurrence all over the discourse.

Maw (1976) describes functions of language are described very comprehensively in terms of Imran Khan's speech delivered at UNGA. This was his first speech. His speech is quoted with examples of the function of language by Halliday.

These lexical devices and language functions emphasize feelings, expressions for purpose of clarification. Repetition stresses the speakers' ideas. At each use of these devices, there is a certain purpose. The reader can reach such purpose through using his/her knowledge of the world which is related to this particular topic of discourse.

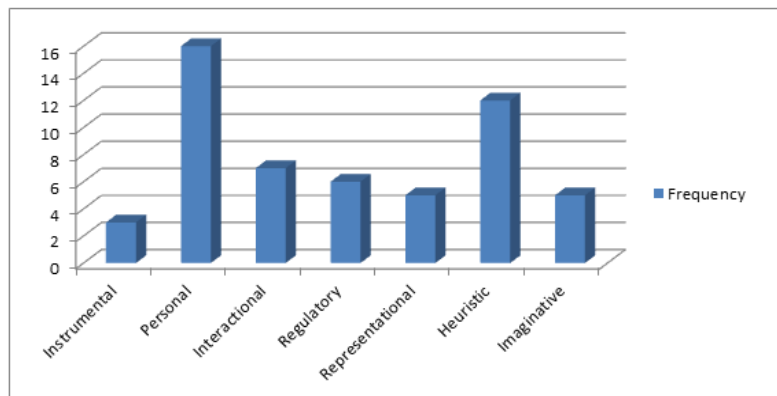


Figure 3: Halliday's function of language is demonstrated in the bar chart.

Figure 3, the bar graph demonstrates Halliday's functions of language in terms of Imran Khan's speech. The personal pronouns are used frequently in the speech. While the heuristic function of language presented thirteen times in the speech of Imran Khan. The basic purpose of Halliday's function of language is to convey the facts and information. Imran Khan's speech also presents Halliday's function of language.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Imran Khan uses some of the explicit lexical cohesive devices to achieve his goals. First of all, the subject of scouting concerning to the communicative events of political text helps to understand and interpret the meaning of Imran Khan's discourse. The speech of Imran Khan at UNGA provides a summary of the information about the content of the discourse. The theme of the speech is important and something crucial in the interpretation of the discourse structure as it helps withdraw the items into one point, that is, the point of interpretation that limits the reader to think only about the conventional meaning relevant to the topic of discourse topic.

The lexical cohesion devices; most kinds of lexical cohesion dominant used in this speech is repetition. The second dominant used in this speech is a synonym. The third dominant used in this speech is collocation, the next dominant used in this speech is a noun and the least dominant used in this speech is superordinate. The most dominant used repetition in Imran Khan's speech indicated



that he used repetition as an affirmation of meaning and adds aesthetic value to the sentence. Related with the theory of Keraf (Zakiyah, 2015), it is mentioned that repetition is a repetition of sounds, syllables, words, or parts of the sentence that are considered necessary to put pressure in an appropriate context. In the speech, Imran Khan emphasized to the leaders of the world to focus on the core issues, i.e., Climate change, Money laundering, Islamophobia, and the Kashmir. Consequently, the speech was well-received by the members of the UN General Assembly and the serious audience globally.

## 6 AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIAL

Information can be made available by contacting the corresponding author.

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