

2010

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Recommended Citation

Khan, Feroz Hassan (2010) "Prospects for Indian and Pakistani Arms Control and Confidence-Building Measures," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 63 : No. 3 , Article 8.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol63/iss3/8>

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PROSPECTS FOR INDIAN AND PAKISTANI ARMS CONTROL AND CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES

Feroz Hassan Khan

The regional dynamic in South Asia is both extravagant and complicated. For centuries various empires have risen, thrived, and fallen, as numerous wars and clashes for control over resources spread across the geography. South Asian history writ large has seen hypothetical borders redrawn several times, leaving in question the viability of state control and perpetuating ethnic tensions. Though the great partition of India in 1947 ought to have politically resolved communal disharmony, the haste of British withdrawal created a geopolitical quagmire that has resulted in an “enduring rivalry” between the nations of India and Pakistan, one that has lasted for more than sixty years.¹

The contemporary security climate in the region has exacerbated this historical precedent of protracted conflict, which has in turn nurtured an environment

Feroz Hassan Khan is a lecturer and senior researcher in the Center for Contemporary Conflict in the Department of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California. He is a former brigadier general in the Pakistan Army, with experience in combat and in command on the Line of Control in Kashmir and at Siachin Glacier, as well as service in numerous assignments in the United States, Europe, and Asia. Brigadier Khan holds an MA from the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C. He is the author or coauthor of numerous articles and contributions to edited collections; his book Eating Grass: Pakistan and the Bomb is forthcoming next year.

that remains resistant to the building of trust and confidence. Since their demonstrations of nuclear capabilities, both India and Pakistan have increased the risk of war, with cross-border arms buildups and failure to sustain a peace dialogue. Moreover, the regional security environment breeds broader strategic anxieties in both India and Pakistan, which makes the likelihood of conventional war between the two nuclear-armed neighbors higher than it is anywhere else in the world.

Thus the ensuing regional culture leans more toward military competition than to strategic restraint

Naval War College Review, Summer 2010, Vol. 63, No. 3

and conflict resolution (the *logical* course for strategic stability). Clearly, to consider the prospects of arms control and confidence-building measures (CBMs) in the midst of this climate is problematic in itself, but the various grievances become even more convoluted when strategic imbalances are further influenced by the singular perceptions of the predominating powers in the region.

In the face of these geopolitical calamities, this article examines the realistic prospects of sustainable arms control and CBMs in South Asia over the next decade. The first section examines the strategic anxieties of India and Pakistan, respectively; the second section reviews the treaties and CBMs that have been attempted in the past (some of them still applicable today), drawing out a trend of crisis and bilateral missteps. Later sections analyze the Strategic Restraint Regime (SRR) proposed in 1998, as well as the Lahore Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of 1999, and how such measures can be more effective in the future. Finally, the article presents three possible trajectories that the region might take and suggests new ways forward that could create an environment amenable to pragmatic CBMs and limited arms-control measures.

STRATEGIC ANXIETIES

As previously suggested, the dynamics associated with the endemic rivalry between India and Pakistan must be viewed through the broader lens of regional politics and security. This becomes more apparent when considering India's perception of Chinese strategic objectives in South Asia. If any realistic CBMs are to be proposed for the future, such perceptions must be factored into the overall security equation.

India's Strategic Anxieties

In general, India believes that China is encircling the country, by establishing special partnerships with many of India's smaller neighbors. Specifically, India is irked by the evolving relationship between China and Pakistan, a relationship that India believes has the singular purpose of thwarting its own natural rise as an aspiring global power.

One of the more onerous issues is a perception that has come to be known as the "string of pearls."² To provide a frame of reference, Pakistan's Makran Coast has strategic importance, in that it offers Pakistan options to counter India's projection of power in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan has already shown signs that it is moving to develop broader air and naval capabilities. The buildup of the Gwadar commercial port along this coast—assisted by China—exacerbates India's anxieties and provides Pakistan with broader strategic utility. For the Chinese, it provides a potential access to energy pipelines that would "unlock trade

routes to the market and energy supplies of Central Asia,” with less risk than at present.³

This is important because India is geographically restricted in its access to both the east and west, due to the physical presence of Bangladesh and Pakistan, and in the north by the Himalayas. In this regard, India’s access to Southwest Asia runs into a geopolitical barrier, because of its rivalry with Pakistan. Similarly, India suffers constraints with respect to East Asia imposed by Bangladesh and Burma, which physically block India’s access to those markets. With China entering the scene with a growing presence along the Makran Coast, the situation from India’s perspective becomes even more tenuous. This strategic handicap, taken as a whole, forces India to rely on its maritime capabilities in order to maintain trade routes and logistics between its continental shores and the rest of the world.

As a part of this expanded naval presence, India has launched ballistic-missile submarines and produced other naval capabilities that can act as an extended security arm for its various trade routes, as well as a third strike capability (that is, in addition to its land-based and air assets). India’s growing presence in the maritime environment, in conjunction with its overall strategic rise, makes its smaller neighbors nervous. This strategic apprehension creates a ripple effect across the region whereby the smaller countries move closer to external alliances in order to balance India’s rising power.

Additionally, India believes, China is propping up Pakistan’s nuclear and military capabilities in areas where Western technologies are not meeting the need. In particular, India is under the impression that Pakistan is taking advantage of America’s involvement in Afghanistan, which places it in a unique position to acquire strategic capabilities and political remuneration.

Whatever its concerns, however, India’s strategic calculus of structural and conventional force advantages over Pakistan was neutralized (to an extent) when Pakistan demonstrated its nuclear capability in 1998. Many Indian strategists believe that this nuclear hedge enables Pakistan to conduct asymmetric warfare against India, without fear of reprisal. This perception reinforces India’s belief that as long as Pakistan can keep India engaged inwardly through insurgencies and build its own strategic alliances with the United States and China, India’s rise to power will be curtailed.

Pakistan’s Strategic Anxieties

Generally speaking, Pakistan’s strategic anxieties in the region are a mirror reflection of those of India, vis-à-vis the other half of the “enduring rivalry.” For

Pakistan, however, the objective is threefold but simple: national survival, relevance as an actor in the region, and refusal to be marginalized by India.

Pakistan wields vast manpower, with a population of 170 million; possesses strong strategic assets, in the shape of nuclear weapons and natural resources; fields a conventional army of a half-million; and is a proactive player in the Muslim world. The latter point not only connects Pakistan with the Muslim community in a bilateral sense but also helps in bridging the gaps between Islamic countries and China and with the United States. Despite the credit it has received for such macro-level factors, its intense rivalry and competition with India over the past sixty years have made Pakistan India-phobic and paranoid about a variety of issues.

Much as India worries over the geographic firewall that restricts its land accessibility to the east and west, so does Pakistan interpret Indian foreign-policy maneuvers as aimed at geopolitically encircling Pakistan itself. As India increases its influence and presence in Afghanistan with a slew of consulates, Pakistan considers these developments hostile to its interests. India has also established a strategically located air base in Tajikistan (Ayni Air Base in Dushanbe), which also adds to these suspicions. Further, India's investment in the Iranian port of Chabahar—fifty miles west of Gwadar Port—and construction of roads through Zahedan into Afghanistan add additional tension in an area that is essential for the transportation of goods and energy to a host of countries. All these moves are seen as encircling Pakistan.

There are also operational issues that hinder Pakistan's strategic balance on its eastern and western borders. India's strategic orientation remains toward Pakistan, where the bulk of its armed forces are deployed. As a result, Indian and Pakistani troops remain deployed—"eyeball to eyeball"—along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir; this has been the case since 1948. On its opposite border along the frontier territory with Afghanistan, Pakistan's anxieties are manifest in the complex internal strife and multiple insurgencies and instabilities. In sum, Pakistan must balance dealing with India, multiple insurgencies, and retaining interests in Afghanistan.

The ultimate nightmare for Pakistan would be to live between two hostile neighbors, India in the east and Afghanistan in the west. Pakistan believes that unless issues are resolved with India, it will have no choice but to seek arrangements with an ethnically diverse and friendly government in Kabul—a government that would not do the bidding of powers hostile to Pakistan or further destabilize already troubled border areas. On the contrary, if Afghanistan becomes a strategic instrument of Indian geopolitical outmaneuvering, that, added to the ongoing problems in Jammu and Kashmir, would produce a perpetual state of tension and crises among the three countries.

Overarching these regional issues is Pakistan's fear that its long-term ally the United States may eventually turn against it, under Indian influence. The U.S.-Indian nuclear deal reached in 2005 exacerbated these anxieties, viewed as it is by Pakistan as skewing the balance even more greatly in favor of the already powerful India.⁴ In fact, since 9/11, there has been a slow erosion of overall international sympathy with Pakistan's grievances, especially with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, the socioeconomic costs of three decades of Afghan wars, and daily episodes of terrorism within Pakistan.

The prospects of such growing political and economic disparities with respect to India, coupled with these mounting internal problems (especially persistent terrorism, ranging from Quetta to Swat), will continue to endanger Pakistan's aggregate national power. Consistent pressure from India, instability in Afghanistan, and a fragile domestic structure are likely to render Pakistan as a state significantly weak and unstable. Its aforementioned strengths could very well become vulnerabilities, stirring broad, international upheaval. These circumstances make Pakistanis all the keener to obtain a strategic peace with India, one that allows them the space and time to recover from these challenges.

BREAKING THE GRIDLOCK

Given these strategic anxieties, it is no wonder that both India and Pakistan succumb to gridlock rather than seeking a path of reconciliation and confidence building. Further, because of blatantly conflicting objectives between the two countries—one global, the other regional—security competition and asymmetry of interests continue to grow between the two. Despite negativity and pessimism, however, there is in fact potential for both new confidence building and arms-control measures. A brief overview of CBMs from 1947 to date will illustrate the nature of the problem; a conceptual consideration of past initiatives is especially necessary in that they have been directly connected to crisis and mired in ulterior motives. The lessons of these unsuccessful attempts can strengthen efforts to frame such policies in the future.

Major Agreements and Treaties, 1947–2004

Every major treaty or CBM between these countries has its origin in crisis resolution. Historically, Pakistan preferred outside mediation in disputes with India; as a smaller and weaker party with a strong sense that morality was on its side, it was convinced that it could win justice through international organizations like the United Nations or alliances with major powers. That proved to be a fallacy. Instead, during the Cold War Pakistan became a geopolitical pawn between the superpowers. Rather than strengthening itself by alliance and international assertions of its relevancy as against its archrival India, it found itself in strategic

competition with India in frameworks where trajectories favored India and alliances did not mitigate its own security concerns. This became a fundamental reason for Pakistan to seek a nuclear weapons program.

India, for its part, has always despised outside intervention in its subcontinental affairs and sought to address all problems on a bilateral basis—because of an asymmetry of power tipped in its favor. In general, bilateralism has suited India for strategic reasons and conforms to its traditional nonaligned stance of keeping the superpowers away from the region. Nevertheless, despite this insistence, not a single problem has been resolved on a bilateral basis. Moreover, since 9/11 Pakistan has come under scrutiny from the international community in regard to its use of asymmetric force to settle the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir. In that context, outside intervention does not necessarily favor Pakistan but could strengthen India's position. That aside, however, treaties and agreements brokered by outside intervention have had a generally good record of implementation on the parts of both India and Pakistan.

The first agreement after the 1947–48 war over Kashmir, through bilateral talks between India and Pakistan, came about as an extension of a UN Security Council resolution. Under the 1948 resolution the 1949 Karachi Agreement was constituted. This initial agreement should have served as a framework for other measures since then.⁵ To date, the Karachi Agreement has been the guideline for the conduct of troops deployed along the LoC in Kashmir, monitored by UN observers. Both India and Pakistan have deployed forces along the LoC adhering (by and large) to the parameters set by the UN-approved agreement.

The next major agreement, the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, was also a response to crisis and was brokered by a third party, in this case the World Bank. This agreement, over water distribution, had its origin in the Kashmir crisis. While an “out of the box” interim solution from former president Pervez Musharraf to the Kashmir dispute went nowhere, negotiations continued to drag on behind the scenes. At the same time, India began constructing new dams in Kashmir, diverting water resources authorized for Pakistan; this was in clear violation of the Indus Waters Treaty. (Kashmir is not just an ideological and territorial dispute but a water-resource issue as well.) Though both India and Pakistan have developed reasonable complaints about it, the basic tenets of the treaty have functioned despite many wars and military crises. Yet if India's strategy to use dam construction and water diversion as leverage against Pakistan persists, it could well lead to the eventual collapse of the Indus Waters Treaty altogether.

The Tashkent Agreement of 1966 was brokered by the Soviets after the 1965 war between India and Pakistan, with the indirect support of the United States. Once again, it came about as a result of crisis and war. Though the Tashkent Agreement provided no framework for resolution of the disputes between India

and Pakistan—at least for the following twenty-five years—it put the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir on the back burner.

After the ensuing Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, however, the approach to dialogue changed. With India's primacy established, no further agreement was implemented on a third-party basis. Subsequent agreements would be conducted bilaterally, or with mere pressure from, rather than direct involvement of, the international community. Three major agreements can be attributed to Indian and Pakistani bilateral relations. Again, each of these agreements had crisis as a backdrop:

- The Simla Agreement of 1972, directly in response to the 1971 war
- The Lahore Agreement of 1999, in reaction to the crisis spawned from the 1998 nuclear tests and the ongoing Kashmir crisis
- The 2004 Islamabad Accord, resulting from 9/11 and the 2001–2002 military crisis and Kashmir issues.

All the bilateral agreements had an effective framework to resolve conflict but no effective longevity. One after another they were violated by one side or the other, each time resulting in deep military crises. For example, in the mid-1980s, India was undergoing a Sikh crisis in Punjab when the Indian Army assaulted the Sikh holy shrine in Amritsar (Operation BLUESTAR), exacerbating the Sikh insurgency. Simultaneously, in a planned military operation, India decided to occupy the Siachin Glacier (Operation MEGHDOOT) in the disputed northern area of Kashmir. This event once again brought Jammu and Kashmir to the forefront of the India-Pakistan dispute. Two years later, the Indian Army chief, General Krishnaswamy Sundarji, planned a major military exercise code-named BRASSTACKS, incorporating a secret plan for a preventive war to neutralize Pakistan's nuclear program.⁶ These two crises occurred at a time when Pakistan was deeply involved in an asymmetric war (with the support of the United States) against the Soviet Union.

The next crisis, in 1990, resulted from a Kashmir uprising that escalated to such a point that India and Pakistan were once again at the brink of war. This crisis was particularly significant in that both India and Pakistan had covert nuclear weapons capabilities, which was known to both sides. This factor prompted the United States to intervene in such crises from then onward.

The history of trust-damaging episodes in the midst of such crisis has had far more weight than has the record of keeping faith in treaties. Again, while India has been able to project its position to a global audience, Pakistan has typically had a smaller, regional venue. All of these elements help explain the rise and failure of various agreements, treaties, and accords. Yet another lens with regard to

progress on the diplomatic front is the introduction of strategic confidence-building measures.

Strategic CBMs

The notion of “strategic CBMs” implies that nuclear and conventional-force CBMs are in a symbiotic relationship. One of the foremost issues regarding CBMs between India and Pakistan is of a conceptual nature. The premise behind *strategic* CBMs is that nuclear measures on their own are meaningless if conventional force restraints are not applied. There are four distinct areas where India and Pakistan differ in terms of structuring and harnessing CBMs, where arms control becomes problematic.

First, India finds abhorrent anything that binds it to regional limits. From the outset India has taken global disarmament as the necessary context to project its own position on disarmament with regard to nuclear weapons. Pakistan, in contrast, insists that everything is regional and India-specific. India does not want to be tied down to Pakistan alone but recognizes problems with other countries (specifically China) that must also be considered; it wants only nuclear military CBMs, to keep its conventional-force supremacy intact. Meanwhile, Pakistan’s insistence on regional nuclear CBMs is a result of Western pressure to forgo its nuclear ambitions; its nuclear program was nurtured under obstacles, sanctions, and other reprisals imposed by the nonproliferation regime. Moreover, these sanctions have affected Pakistan negatively, whereas India has sustained them with little or no effect.

Second, India considers any CBM that inhibits its use of force within the region as contradicting its force posture; this is Pakistan’s fundamental problem. Third, India insists that nuclear CBMs begin with a declared doctrine; Pakistan simply believes that real doctrines are classified, that declared doctrines are simply “verbal posturing” meant for diplomatic consumption only.⁷

Last, India believes that its declared second-strike doctrine and civilian supremacy over the armed forces sufficiently explain its articulation of command and control over nuclear weapons. For Pakistan, clear delineation of command channels and explicit assignment of decision-making bodies are necessary for a system responsible for managing nuclear weapons in peace, crisis, and war. This emphasis on command and control reflects Pakistan’s own checkered history of civil-military relations.

With all this as background, Pakistan began to make regional proposals beginning with India’s first nuclear test, in 1974. It made seven regionally based proposals, each automatically rejected by India.⁸ This allowed Pakistan to show—that is, to show the region—that India did not want to cooperate, thus placing the burden of defending its position on India. Pakistan knew that the

proposals were not realistic, and the international community did as well (though not all were disingenuous, and there might have been a different outcome had world powers not dismissed them). Pakistan also used these regional proposals to create the diplomatic space for the development of its own nuclear program, while simultaneously shifting the responsibility for proliferation to the bigger power.

New military and nuclear CBMs, similar to the treaties previously discussed, came in the wake of nuclear developments and military crises. Most of them were, once again, bilateral. For example, the prohibition in 1988 against attacking nuclear installations and facilities was a response to information, which was widely analyzed, showing that India would attack Pakistani nuclear installations; precedent was also established by Siachin and the bombing of Iraqi nuclear facilities.

India and Pakistan once again adopted bilateral agreements following the major crisis in the 1980s, when political leadership under Zia-ul-Haq and subsequent civilian leaders, like Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, created initiatives with India's Rajiv Gandhi and other congressional leaders. Additional agreements would follow.

Notification of military exercises and airspace violations actually arose from BRASSTACKS and other, minor incidents in which the Indian Army contemplated making war on Pakistan. The agreement would oblige each side to provide advance notification of military exercises.

Another example is the bilateral, joint declaration in 1992 of the complete prohibition of chemical weapons, a result of allegations by both sides that the other was building a chemical weapons program. This joint agreement was also a way to deflect pressure from the international community, which was then negotiating the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which was eventually signed in 1993. When India declared possession of chemical weapons as required by the CWC, however, Pakistan protested, alleging violation of the bilateral, joint declaration against chemical weapons.

Last is the hotlines agreement between the directors-general of military operations (DGMOs), foreign secretaries, and maritime security agencies. It came about as an agreed mechanism by which military and diplomats could communicate in order to prevent emergence of a crisis and manage escalation. Though this is a reasonable purpose and a practical means of communication, it has not been used in such a manner; instead, the hotlines have typically been used for deception, at worst, and postcrisis management, at best. There are plenty of examples of such misuse of this otherwise productive tool: hotlines were useful after the Kargil crisis, but not during it;⁹ hotlines between the DGMOs did not work when the 1999 Indian plane hijacking crisis was at its peak; the foreign

secretaries line did not prevent the Mumbai 2008 attack from derailing the entire peace process; and the maritime security hotline has not prevented the daily seizure of fishermen by each side but has been used only after the fact when the governments decide to return them.

All of these agreements reflect thoughtful ideas but incredibly poor implementation. Neither side has built upon such measures; instead, each has used them as means to counteract the other.

The Lahore MOU and the Strategic Restraint Regime

The Lahore MOU is, in contrast, by far the most significant agreement between India and Pakistan, one that has not just created a framework for new arms control and CBMs but offers the prospect of conflict resolution as well.

The Lahore MOU came about at the famous summit between the prime ministers of India and Pakistan in February 1999. The agreement was a result of an intense eight-month process, beginning after the nuclear test in May 1998, in which American diplomats led by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot were actively involved. UN Security Council Resolution 1172, of June 1998, condemned both India and Pakistan, placing stringent conditions on both countries and addressing the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

In fact, many ideas flowed between Indian and Pakistani diplomats during this period.¹⁰ India and Pakistan decided to “triangulate” their bilateral dialogues, making the United States a third party. Theoretically, this was a good way forward, with each side speaking separately to the United States; however, suspicion ensued. Another entanglement was that the United States approached the issue based on its experience in Europe; that did not necessarily conform to the strategic realities of South Asia. For example, most CBMs and agreements of the Cold War had been fashioned for a bipolar world, but the Lahore agreements happened after the East-West conflict had ended.

Despite these incongruities, “strategic restraint” became the term du jour. The American expert team presented Pakistan a paper called “Minimum Deterrence Posture,” offering such recommendations as geographical separation of major components of nuclear arsenals and their delivery means; segregation of delivery systems from warhead locations; declaration of nonnuclear delivery systems, with their specific locations (e.g., which squadrons of aircraft, at given locations, would be nuclear or nonnuclear); establishment of finite ceilings for fissile-material production and monitoring of nuclear testing; and last, limitation of production and ballistic flight tests. All this was meant to produce what was referred to as a “strategic pause.”

These proposals were alien to South Asian security experts. Again, they had been derived from Cold War concepts that were not applicable to the regional

security environment. India and Pakistan, obviously, did not accept them; however, the Pakistan side did recognize these concepts in principle, with a promise to reconsider those proposals it presumed to be within its security interests. Subsequently, Pakistan transformed these U.S. proposals into its own, regionally based concept, the SRR.¹¹ The SRR was conceptually based upon the principle of nuclear restraint, with conventional force restraint as well—hence, it was a strategic CBM. It was simply not practical for a small country like Pakistan to “segregate” delivery systems, as suggested by the United States. That was unacceptable, because it undercut the necessary ambiguity of Pakistan’s strategic deterrence, while allowing India to wage conventional war against it. Finally, Pakistan and India were not subscribers to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), though they were in essential agreement with the United States that they should not conduct more tests.

What Pakistan proposed was a comprehensive conventional-force restraint agreement. This proposal had three major elements: identification of the offensive forces of each country, with their locations and postures; designation of geographical border areas as Low Force Zones (LFZs), from which offensive forces would be kept away; and a long-term mutually balanced force reduction, as conflict resolution and peace prevailed in the region. The Pakistani side produced several alternative proposals and designated each side’s offensive forces. Identifying forces that are dangerous to each other would allow measures to separate them geographically in order to prevent tension and armed conflict.

The LFZs would be the hallmark of this intended policy. The border areas and the towns close by would be defensive only, the sizes of forces in their garrisons to be agreed upon by both sides. In the event of changes, each side would notify the other. The proposed eventual force reduction would be “mutually balanced” because India has a much larger military structure; conventional force reductions would be *proportional*, involving equal ratios.

On the question of “nonmating” nuclear weapons from their delivery systems, Pakistan acknowledged this to be an existential issue of nuclear posture. Pakistan was amenable to formalizing regional nondeployment of nuclear weapons in conjunction with conflict resolution and conventional force restraints. The SRR also proposed mutual missile restraints, including range and payload ceilings, flight-testing notification, and prohibition of destabilizing modernization, such as missile defense or submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

However, the United States accepted India’s position in not agreeing to these terms. This derailed the whole process. The dialogue lost its energy, as the United States began to mirror India’s position, and Pakistan lost interest. Pakistan’s

fundamental problem was India's conventional threat, which remained unaddressed in every proposal by the United States. Any CBMs not related to conventional force would be irrelevant. The failure of SSR to be accepted in South Asia set the tone of U.S. policy toward the region, and a new strategic competition between India and Pakistan began. American ignorance of the SSR was a historic failure; a general peace and stability framework could have been produced, as against a trajectory of competition and conflict.

Nevertheless, the Lahore MOU framework had come about as a result of political will from the leadership in both India and Pakistan. The bureaucrats were pressured to reach an agreement within a span of ten days—and they did. This not only illustrates that there is no dearth of ideas as far as CBMs are concerned but emphasizes the importance of political will. The Lahore MOU still stands as the best way to pick up the threads of a peace and security architecture for South Asia.

BAD, UGLY, AND GOOD: TRAJECTORIES IN THE REGION

India and Pakistan could take any of three possible trajectories in the second decade of the twenty-first century, given their current courses. The stability of the region would depend on the dynamics generated by the scenario that emerges—ideally, one that promotes peace and security through strategic CBMs.

Bad. This scenario already exists: today the region as a whole stands in a “bad” position. The choice is to go down either a path that leads to a *good* scenario or one that plummets the situation into a multitude of *ugly* developments.

The status quo between India and Pakistan is fraught with tension, where trust has been lost (as has been shown throughout this article). No third-party influence can change this inertia. The only positive influence is the United States; however, even under its nudging, India and Pakistan continue to only “talk the talk,” not “walk the walk.” In each failed dialogue process the stronger side learns the weaker side's negotiating positions and finds vulnerabilities that it can exploit when tension and crises return. Therefore, whenever Pakistan has tried to concede points in the past, India, instead of converting the development into a sincere, honest proposal, has come back with an alternative proposition that it knows full well would be unacceptable for Pakistan.

The result is a gradual arms race that continues to push the region closer to conventional force deployments. India continues to apply coercive diplomatic pressure and suggestive doctrines like Cold Start, with threats implicit in public statements by civilian and military leaders alike.¹² In fact, Indian Army chief Deepak Kapur recently stated publicly that India could deal with Pakistan within the first ninety-six hours of engagement and then immediately turn to

China.¹³ This is a merely one example of the aggressive posturing by the Indian military in recent years. Because Pakistani forces are deployed on multiple fronts, where potential political crises exist, the likelihood is that Pakistan will push toward strategic weapons deployment or shift to an ambiguous nuclear deployment—in two or three years, if trends persist.

Every major power is working with India on nuclear agreements, making India the only country in the world that is a nonmember of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but is at the same time recognized as a de facto nuclear-weapons state. This appeasing of a state that has challenged the nonproliferation regime and is not subject to the NPT is creating in Pakistan a sense of Western duplicity and discrimination. These issues, coupled with the U.S. agenda to jump-start the global arms-control process (CTBT, etc.), will force Pakistan into a position where it no longer has any incentive to cooperate.

Ugly. If this *bad* trend continues, an even direr scenario will ensue. Increasing tension between India and China, as well as India and Pakistan, will develop. This will lead to a heightened security environment in the region, leading military forces to be on the alert, if not fully deployed on the borders. Warfare could easily become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Technological innovation would be focused on the acquisition or deployment of missile defenses, with the transfer of such technologies as the Israeli Arrow antiballistic missile. China may not deploy its strategic arsenal, but Pakistan cannot be expected to remain nondeployed if it does. In response, India would deploy a strategic arsenal made more robust by nuclear submarines, or a mix of strategic weapons. If a situation of this sort happens, the possibility of hot pursuit across the LoC by Indian ground or special forces, cross-border attacks by the Indian Air Force, or Indian naval coercive deployment in the Arabian Sea to exploit Pakistan's vulnerabilities cannot be ruled out.

Alternatively, the Cold Start deployment organization—involving “integrated battle groups”—could be implemented. This would be a clear fortification of the border and a flagrant attempt to escalate. In response, Pakistan would break loose from all arms-control discussions. This could lead to a general meltdown of the regional situation, with the United States no longer in a position to intervene positively.

Good. The “ugly” scenario can be prevented if the current trajectories are reversed through cautious influence by the powers to end the India-Pakistan deadlock. If the dialogue process does lead in a positive direction and in a meaningful way, there can certainly be a “good” option, with a potential for strategic CBMs.

India must make a conscientious policy shift toward Pakistan, recognizing the two positive trends that have recently emerged: first, the success of democratic political processes, and second, the focus of the Pakistani military on opposing violent extremism. India must reach out through the dialogue process to strengthen and support these trends. India should also revise its current security doctrine of coercion (Cold Start), exploitation (e.g., backing away from a perceived negative role in Afghanistan), and aggressive diplomatic isolation of Pakistan, which is in vogue at the time of this writing.

The best course for India is to pick up the threads of the Lahore MOU and Islamabad Accord. If India takes up the Lahore framework and gives fair consideration to the SSR (through the lens of strategic CBMs) that Pakistan offered, progress can be made.

By way of easing the relationship and initiating people-to-people contact, four separate endeavors should be agreed upon between India and Pakistan:

- Promote religious tourism. Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, and members of other religious sects should be afforded an opportunity to visit shrines in India, as well as in Pakistan.
- Increase cultural tourism and sports exchanges. India has used sports as a cultural and political tool in the past in ways ranging from threatening not to send cricket teams for competition to openly supporting Hindu extremists threatening Pakistani players and cultural performances. Such acts should cease and be replaced with more positive exchanges.
- Ease trade relations. There are concerns on both sides, but there can be some linkages.
- Cooperate on the Indus Waters Treaty. For the first time, there is a sense that India is using its position to bolster the water rights of Pakistan at its own expense, by erecting dams, etc. If the Indians move in a direction that embraces cooperation on such important strategic issues, the prospects of CBMs can sow seed in this fertile soil.

A WAY FORWARD

In the next three to five years, there are four key areas in which prospects exist for confidence-building measures, even rudimentary arms control—all of which can be attributed to the tragic Mumbai incident in 2008. They are mentioned here only briefly; further analysis and elaboration can be the subject of a later discussion. Yet it is important to provide an overview of such potential measures in proposing a new way forward.

First and most immediate is a CBM by which India and Pakistan revive the Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism that was agreed in 2006, as a follow-on to the 2004 Islamabad Accord. This mechanism failed as a result of the Mumbai incident. It is important that both countries draw lessons from the failure and improve the mechanism so as to prevent the derailment of relations as a result of a terror attack. It is unlikely that terrorism in the region will disappear anytime soon, and it is important to not allow terrorists to hold two nuclear-armed states hostage.

Next, India and Pakistan should establish a national risk reduction center. Communications were deadlocked at both political and military levels after the horrific Mumbai event. This indicated the fragility of relations between the two countries. An institutional mechanism for communication about and resolution of such risks—over a spectrum from a Mumbai-type terror incident up to a nuclear-related accident—is now essential.

The third CBM is maritime in nature. The Mumbai incident involved maritime transit, which is all the more reason for developing maritime CBMs between the two countries. India and Pakistan can, under the spirit of the Lahore MOU, begin an incidents-at-sea agreement, delineate maritime boundaries to prevent incursions by fishermen, and develop maritime cooperation in other areas, like piracy. The maritime hotline should be put to better use than it is at present, as to prevent another Mumbai-related event or abduction of innocent fishermen.

Finally, though it may appear premature, India and Pakistan must conduct a sober analysis of their ballistic-missile inventories. As widely reported and understood, their shortest-range ballistic missiles—the Prithvi-I in the case of India, the HATF-I for Pakistan—have little strategic utility and pose technical problems. It may be wise for India and Pakistan to eliminate these two capabilities as a first step. This would be symbolic, not impacting military stature or capabilities for various contingencies. In the long term, however, there may be a realization that the next category of ballistic missiles, Prithvi-II and HATF-II, may also be of less military utility. (The technical and strategic aspects are left for further analysis at a later time.)

Nonetheless, if the current deadlock over dialogue changes into a sustained peace process, it puts the region on the “good” path. India and Pakistan can then commence meaningful confidence-building measures, for which there are clauses existing within the Lahore MOU that can be resurrected. Examples would be bilateral consultations on security, disarmament, and nonproliferation issues; a review of the existing communications links; and periodic assessments of the implementation of existing CBMs. The Lahore MOU also promised that

agreements would be negotiated at a technical-expert level. In general, it would be wise of India and Pakistan to begin a program of arms control and CBMs in the next decade, under the rubric of the Lahore MOU.

The first decade of the twenty-first century has been plagued with tensions in South Asia, from the war on terror in response to 9/11 to the lasting rivalry between India and Pakistan. This decade has shown that India and Pakistan remain on the path of competition and nonresolution, a path steeped in historical precedent. The next decade should reverse this trend and shift from competition to a cooperative security framework, one in which resolution of new security threats and nontraditional security issues—water, energy, food security, and cross-border terrorism—take precedence over old military disputes. India and Pakistan share a history of competition and failure to follow through in the resolution of disputes. Matters will worsen in the next decade—unless the countries take advantage of positive elements that exist and adopt forward-looking, cooperative-security outlooks.

NOTES

- Views expressed herein are solely the author's personal views and do not represent either the Pakistani government, or the U.S. Department of Defense. The author is grateful to Nick M. Masellis—NSA research associate, MS in defense analysis—for his research assistance.
1. The term “enduring rivalry” is borrowed from T. V. Paul, ed., *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005). Paul defines an “enduring rivalry” as a conflict between two or more states, lasting more than two decades, with several militarized interstate disputes punctuating the relationship in between, and characterized by a persistent, fundamental, and long-term incompatibility of goals.
 2. Christopher J. Pehrson, *String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China's Rising Power across the Asia Littoral*, Carlisle Papers in Security Strategy (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, July 2006), available at www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/.
 3. Robert Kaplan, “Pakistan's Fatal Shore,” *Atlantic* (May 2009).
 4. A bilateral accord, jointly declared on 18 July 2005 by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and signed in October 2008, by which India would separate its military and civilian nuclear facilities and subject the latter to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards, and the United States would work toward full civilian nuclear cooperation with India. See “Background: The U.S.-India Nuclear Deal,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, www.cfr.org/publication/9663/.
 5. The actual dates of the resolutions were 13 April 1948 and 5 January 1949. See Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tension since 1947* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2001), pp. 20–22.
 6. Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), pp. 92–95.
 7. See George H. Quester, *Nuclear Pakistan and Nuclear India: Stable Deterrent or Proliferation Challenge?* (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, 1992), p. 12.
 8. The regional proposals are as follows: the South Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone,

- November 1974; Joint Renunciation of Acquisition or the Manufacture of Nuclear Weapons, 1978; mutual inspections of nuclear facilities, 1979; simultaneous acceptance of IAEA “full scope safeguards,” 1979; simultaneous accession to the NPT, 1979; bilateral nuclear test-ban treaty, 1987; multilateral conferences on nonproliferation in South Asia in 1987 and 1991.
9. For this May–July 1999 conflict along the LoC, see “Kargil Conflict 1999,” GlobalSecurity.org.
 10. The author was involved as part of the expert-level dialogue with both the United States and India. UN Security Council Resolution 1172 (1998) is available at www.un.org/.
 11. The author was personally responsible for the preparation of the paper that developed this concept. The paper was presented to the U.S. team on 15 September 1998 in New York. See Feroz H. Khan, “Reducing the Risk of Nuclear War in South Asia,” in *Pakistan’s Nuclear Future: Reining in the Risk*, ed. Henry Sokolski (Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), pp. 70–71.
 12. For the Indian “Cold Start” doctrine, see Walter C. Ladwig III, “A Cold Start for Hot Wars? The Indian Army’s New Limited War Doctrine,” *International Security* 32, no. 3 (Winter 2007/08), pp. 158–90.
 13. Deepak Kapur, quoted in Nirupama Subramanian, “General Kapoor’s Remarks Generate Heat in Pakistan,” *Hindu*, 5 January 2010, available at www.thehindu.com/.