Introduction
South Asia is a region where building peace continues to be an elusive exercise. The paradox between ‘war’ and ‘peace’ is very obvious. While war-making is highly institutionalized and preparation for war in terms of arms build up continues unabated, ‘building confidence’ and ‘cooperative security’ is a highly unstructured and piecemeal exercise. The scanty Conflict Avoidance Measures (CAMs), which are considered precursors to Confidence-building Measures (CBMs), are not observed at the time when they are meant to be applied. The CBMs, that are supposed to be focused on the issues or main conflict that needs to be resolved, are missing.

An unstructured CBMs regime is not fully functional and most of the times subjected to political temperatures in the region. In fact, some times, it seems that CBMs are more ‘politically motivated’ rather than aiming at inspiring confidence and security cooperation with each other. This seems pretty true in the context of India and Pakistan.
A fully institutionalized regime on Conflict Avoidance Measures and Conflict Building Measures, which can be termed as Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) regime, is a prerequisite to security and cooperation in the region. The thrust of the paper is institutionalization of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and security cooperation between India-Pakistan. This is because security and confidence-building matrix in South Asia is largely shaped by prevailing security dynamics between India and Pakistan. Further, broadening the scope of CSBMs, CBMs around Kashmir would be included. The emphasis would be on a parallel approach, and not one of sequencing between military and non-military CBMs, putting one on the fast track and the other on the back burner.

The paper will analyze institutionalization of CBMs and security cooperation between India and Pakistan at three levels. First, at the official and bilateral level; second, at the non-official and Track II & III level and finally at the regional/multilateral level. The main questions that are dealt with in the paper are: How to institutionalize CAMs and enhance their efficacy/implementation between India and Pakistan? What are the areas where CBMs can be institutionalized and how can implementation of the CBMs be improved? What is the linkage between institutionalisation of the CBMs and security co-operation in South Asia?
Defining CBMs

CBMs are generally considered a means to conflict resolution. They are preceded by CAMs and followed by conflict resolution. Definitions of CBMs vary, ranging from the very narrow (looking almost exclusively at military measures) to the much broader interpretations encompassing almost anything that builds confidence. "CBMs can be defined as a mechanism for the substantial reduction of tension between two or more hostile parties. The basic objective of confidence building is to seek optimum harmony and goodwill between the antagonistic parties by bridging communication gap and promoting transparency in their military ties. 1

The term CSBMs is broader in its meaning. "It includes measures that both bolster states' confidence and improve their objective security." The International Working Group (IWG) on Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Asia-Pacific uses an expansive definition of CBMs - namely CSBMs – including formal and informal measures, whether unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral, that address, prevent, or resolve uncertainties among states, including military and political elements. Such measures contribute to a reduction of uncertainty, misperception, and suspicion and thus help to reduce the possibility of incidental or accidental war. 2 The IWG uses the term CSBMs as encompassing or embracing the spirit and intent of proposals calling for trust, confidence-
building measures (mutual assurance measures), community-building measures, and other related confidence-building concepts.

In November 1998 United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDAR) organised a conference in Geneva on ‘Trust and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs)’, adding the notion of ‘trust’ to the terminology of ‘CBMs’. Significantly, TCBM has been coined in the context of South Asia.

There is a logical correlation between military and non-military CBMs. Military CBMs account for the amelioration of political conditions of defence forces or the procedure that could lead to their use in such a way that the likelihood of political as opposed to military approaches to existing conflicts is enhanced. Non-military CBMs, on the other hand, account for the promotion of mutual trust and elimination of misgivings by augmenting economic and social-cultural ties. There must be an adequate balance between the adoption of military and non-military CBMs because the failure to meet that requirement can discredit the process of CBMs.³

**CBMs Regime in South Asia**

CBMs, basically a Western concept, were widely applied during the Cold War by the US and former Soviet Union in ameliorating conflict in Europe between NATO and
Warsaw Pact countries. The signing of the Helsinki Final Act on August 1, 1975 marked the first generation of CBMs that were adopted in the framework of Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as a mechanism for building mutual trust and resolution of conflicts. Later on CBMs were applied with different techniques in various conflict-ridden areas of the world. In the post-Cold War period, with the proliferation of conflicts in different parts of the world, CBMs have acquired a new perspective.

In South Asia CBMs are largely viewed as an alien/Western concept and began to be seriously considered only from the late 1980s. Since independence, India and Pakistan have sporadically followed pre-CBMs, which actually functioned under different names/nomenclatures. But the idea seems to have taken a real hold in the wake of the military crisis of 1986-87 (Brasstacks), and especially since the one in spring 1990.

During the past one decade, CBMs became a catch phrase in the subcontinent. There are about 17 types of CBMs already in place in the region. But they have not been as effective as they were hoped to be. The implementation of CBMs between India and Pakistan, "has been spotty, at best". "Airspace violations occur despite agreed ‘no fly’ zones. Both countries have agreed not to rough up each
other's diplomats, but beatings continue. Pledges have been made not to attack nuclear facilities, but the lists of installations to be protected are incomplete". In blatant violation of the 1992 joint Indo-Pakistan declaration not to produce and/or stock chemical weapons, India continued to do so. On ratification of CWC India had to declare her CW stocks to the OPCW, The Hague, as required by the Chemical Weapons Convention. In March 1999, India did not provide advance information to Pakistan on its largest air force fire-power demonstration (FPD) at Pokhran. In the realm of border security measures, the 1991 agreement between India and Pakistan on the violation of airspace stipulates that armed fixed-wing aircraft are not to fly within ten nautical miles and no aircraft of any kind may fly within 1,000 metres of the border. But India shot down Pakistan Naval surveillance aircraft Atlantique well inside the stipulated limits.

While rhetorical support for CBMs was forthcoming, negotiation and implementation of CBMs lagged behind. "One of the paradoxes of conflict-avoidance and confidence-building measures is that precisely when they are most needed they are most difficult to negotiate and implement properly. For these measures to be of greatest utility, they must be in place and working properly before tensions mount." "Such conditions do not exist in the subcontinent,
where measures have been implemented begrudgingly, at best. Thus there is no sound and reliable basis for India and Pakistan to defuse a surge in tension, especially when Indian and Pakistan leaderships have poor working relationship or are in a weakened position at home. "Under these circumstances, whatever steps to be employed in the event of another crisis will have to be ad hoc and may require third party involvement." 

In fact, there is a growing realisation that CBMs have been "abused to mask intentions rather than create confidence. Just like peace is to security, trust has a flip side — sincerity. An insecure nation is not confident". It is felt that "CBMs have exposed the danger of exhausting political capital and diplomatic energies on limited measures that are not necessarily cost free". Given the track record, it is argued that "the future of trust and CBMs can only manifest meaningfully if these are implemented with sincerity towards genuine conflict resolution and comprehensive peace and security. It is fundamental, therefore, that the nexus of peace, security and CBMs is recognised and the linkage of nuclear risk, conventional force restraint and conflict resolution is duly acknowledged".

**Imperatives for Peace, Dialogue and Cooperation**

There are at least three broad imperatives that would greatly shape the forces of peace, dialogue and cooperation
in South Asia. These could be identified as military/strategic imperatives; economic imperatives and political imperatives.

**Military/strategic imperatives for CBMs**

After the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan and presumed build up of nuclear weapons to stabilize deterrence though in line with different nuclear doctrines, the resort to war or pursuit of military solution to political problems is rationally ruled out. This also calls for a political solution to the central conflict of Kashmir in the region through sustained dialogue. So while great emphasis is being put on the nuclear stabilization regime in the region, it needs to be combined with a broader political framework to resolve the main destabilizing conflict in the region. "The question is whether opportunity can be grasped, before the region arms races into even more uncertain and dangerous future".  

**Economic imperatives for CBMs**

The economic imperatives for CBMs in the region are equally powerful. Both India and Pakistan fully recognize that poverty is their 'common enemy'. Removing poverty and ensuring development is just impossible without peace or at least 'managing security' affairs. The defence expenditures on both sides are tremendous but still unable to provide 'absolute' security to either side. The economic cost of
growing defence expenditure is telling on the social sector. Mahboobul Haq in his 1997 Report says that South Asia is fast emerging as the poorest, the most illiterate, the most malnourished, the least gender sensitive – indeed the most deprived region in the world. About 44% of the total population in India and about 36 million people in Pakistan live in absolute poverty. The 1998 HDC Report concluded that even a freeze on current military spending would release sufficient resources for universal primary education. The potential peace dividend could range from $80 to $125 billion during the period 1997-2010, depending on whether military spending is frozen or whether it is reduced by 5 per cent a year. The report emphasized that such a compact for simultaneous cuts in military spending would not jeopardize the national security of any country in the region. The diversion of resources to social sector is a must for the stability and security of both India and Pakistan. Further, globalization is also putting concerted pressures on both sides to avoid conflict and work for peace.

**Political imperatives for CBMs**

The political imperatives for CBMs are building up pressure in South Asia amidst massive challenges from the State and traditional perimeters of security. Human security is emerging as integral part of national security. Further, the problems of nation building in each of the South Asian
states, more so in India and Pakistan, have acquired external dimension as well that is reflected in intra-state conflicts getting enmeshed with inter-state relations. It is impossible to ensure human security unless political choices are made to release more resources for the welfare of the people. And this political choice seems impossible unless political temperatures in the region are brought down, not on ad hoc basis but on permanent footing.

A change in the culture of adversarial relationship and a strong sense of mutual interest in avoiding war and unintended escalation is required for the implementation of the existing CSBMs regime. "The dispute over Kashmir makes such work more difficult to carry out, but more necessary as well". The comity of nations wants that Kashmir issue should be settled peacefully. "Their prodding is more insistent now, not merely because India and Pakistan have gone nuclear but because the people of Kashmir are politically more assertive, and alienated than ever before."  

CBMs in the 'Cold Peace'

Though strategic, economic and political imperatives are putting pressure on the two main actors in the region to seriously institutionalize CBMs, the Cold War mindset reinforced by mutual distrust, enmity and hatred is constantly
derailing the dialogue process. This is an unavoidable fact and should be addressed squarely. The main cause of this persistent hostility is a plethora of unresolved issues led by Kashmir conflict. Indian and Pakistani perspectives on CBMs also differ widely. While India wants trade, business, cultural and scientific exchanges to precede military CBMs, Pakistan feels that the resolution of the Kashmir dispute is central to any CBMs regime in South Asia. President Musharraf has termed resolution of Kashmir as the ‘biggest CBM’. There is widespread perception in Pakistan that India is trying to use CBMs strategy to put Kashmir on the backburner. The outstanding conflicts between the two countries are Kashmir, Siachen, the Wullar Barrage and demarcation of Sir Creek and the nuclear issue. Out of these, Kashmir is the most intractable and explosive conflict bedevilling not only Indo-Pak relations but also endangering peace and security in the region.

Institutionalizing CBMs Regime in South Asia

Bilateral level

Most of the CBMs agreed upon between India and Pakistan and not fully institutionalised are at the bilateral level and fall in the area of military security. The agreements are intended to limit tensions and avoid unwanted wars. Unlike the high-profile Helsinki confidence-building measures (CBMs) and other measures styled by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSCE), many of the Indo-Pakistani measures have not been negotiated in intricate detail and have not been publicly released. In addition, implementation of these CBMs has been uneven.\textsuperscript{17}

Most of the CBMs now in effect were prompted by the 1947-48, 1965, and 1971 wars and by period of high tension associated with the military exercises conducted between 1986-1991. Some of these CBMs were prompted by superpower initiatives or by the encouragement of international organizations. All this also prompted a series of foreign secretary-level meetings that continued until January 1994. From January 1994 to March 1997, foreign secretary-level talks between India and Pakistan were suspended and some of the CBMs that had been negotiated in the early part of the decade fell into disuse. In 1997, new governments in both India and Pakistan held out the promise of more successful dialogue between the two nations and negotiations were revived during foreign secretary-level talks in March, June, and September 1997. In June 1997 agreement was reached to form 'eight working groups' to consider the major issues between them, including Kashmir. These included:

i. Peace and Security including Confidence Building Measures (CBMs)

ii. Jammu and Kashmir (J & K)
iii. Siachen  
iv. Wular Barrage  
v. Sir Creek  
vi. Terrorism & Drug trafficking  
vii. Economic & commercial cooperation  
viii. Liberalisation of travel facilities and friendly exchanges in various fields

The peace and security and the J&K issues were to be dealt with at the level of foreign secretaries, while discussions on the remaining six were to be monitored and co-ordinated by them.

But by the end of 1997 disputes arose over the ‘operationalising’ of the mechanism and the relative weight of the Kashmir issue in negotiations. This prevented foreign secretary talks from proceeding further. While the Indian side sees Kashmir as one of a number of issues, all equally weighed, the Pakistani side views the Kashmir dispute as the single most important issue.

Meanwhile India and Pakistan went nuclear. The meeting of two Prime Ministers at SAARC summit in Colombo in July 1998 failed to resume bilateral dialogue. The differences on the modalities and mechanism of resuming the dialogue were ironed out on the sidelines of
the Durban NAM summit and India, under tremendous pressure from the world, showed its willingness to discuss J&K separately along with the issue of peace and security. This was formally announced after the Vajpayee-Sharif meeting on 23 September 1998 in New York.

The first round of talks on peace and security and Kashmir issue was held in Islamabad on October 19-21, 1998. But the talks made no headway. Pakistan turned down Indian suggestion of a no-first-use pact on nuclear weapons and offered non-aggression pact, rejected by New Delhi. India turned down Pakistan's suggestion to scale down deployment levels of Indian troops and inviting international observers to monitor the situation in J&K. Pakistan's offer of a strategic and conventional restraint regime\textsuperscript{18} did not find a favourable response from New Delhi. The lack of progress in the round stalled headway in ensuing round on other six subjects held in November in New Delhi.

These talks led to several non-military CBMs, including an agreement to release fishing boats and crew members held in custody of both sides and to ease visa restrictions for travel between the two countries for business people, religious pilgrims, and the elderly. The two countries also agreed to establish a hotline between the Prime Ministers of the two countries and to take all possible steps to prevent
hostile propaganda and provocative actions against each other. These last two measures had been agreed to in previous negotiations but failed to be upheld.  

**Lahore summit**

After much rhetoric and muscle flexing the Sharif-Vajpayee summit took place in Lahore in February 1999. Prime Minister Vajpayee termed it a ‘defining moment in South Asian history’, while Nawaz Sharif urged to ‘go beyond stated positions in resolving the longstanding disputes’. As a mark of reconciliation Vajpayee visited Minar-e-Pakistan and expressed solidarity with a ‘stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan’. Three documents were signed including Lahore Declaration, MoU and Joint Statement that were later referred to as ‘Lahore process’. They enumerated four bilateral initiatives and commitments, subject to negotiation, and eight confidence building measures. On the central issue of Kashmir the first clause of the operative part of the Lahore Declaration said: “The two governments have agreed to intensify their efforts for the resolution of all disputes including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir”. The two sides also agreed to ‘intensify their composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda.’

The CAMs/CBMs enumerated in the MoU included:

i. Bilateral consultations on security concepts, and nuclear doctrines, with a view to developing
measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at avoidance of conflict.

ii. Advance notification of ballistic missile tests.

iii. Notification of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons.

iv. Abiding by their respective unilateral moratorium on conducting further nuclear test explosions subject to their supreme national interests.

v. An agreement to prevent incidents at sea. This initiative could provide guidelines to prevent incidents at sea.

vi. A periodic review of the implementation of existing CBMs and where necessary, set up appropriate consultative mechanisms to monitor and ensure effective implementation of these CBMs.

vii. Review of the existing communication links (between the DGMOs) to upgrade and improve these links.

viii. Bilateral consultations on security, disarmament and non-proliferation issues within the context of negotiations on these issues in multilateral fora.

These were mainly conflict avoidance measures. In the non-military field the two sides were to:

i. Undertake consultations to co-ordinate positions on WTO related issues;

ii. Cooperate in Information technology;
iii. Liberalise the visa a travel regime;
iv. Create a committee to resolve issues relating to missing POWs and civilian detainees.

Besides, attention was paid to somewhat institutionalising of the dialogue process between the two countries, as the Joint Statement enumerated meeting of foreign ministers 'periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern, including nuclear related issues.'

**Agra summit**

Agra summit took place in the backdrop of Kargil conflict and military take over in Pakistan. India vociferously accused Pakistan of derailing the Lahore process and refused to resume talks unless Pakistan stopped 'sponsoring terrorism' in Kashmir. In the run up to Agra, India came with a barrage of CBMs released (4 and 5 July 2001) through the media. These included issuing visa on the LoC and international border; release of civilian prisoners, 20 scholarships for the Pakistani students in Indian technical institutions, inviting writers and artists at the expense of the government and reducing or eliminating tariff on 50 items. Prime Minister Vajpayee also instructed the DGMO of the Army to go to Islamabad for consultations with his Pakistani counterpart to 'strengthen peace along the border'. India also showed interest to setting up of a high level group on
security concepts and nuclear confidence building measures.26 However, the CBMs accompanied Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh’s statement that Kashmir was an ‘integral part of India’ 27 and Prime Minister Vajpayee’s remarks that talks would ‘centre round PoK’.28

On the other hand, President Musharraf proposed ‘no-war pact’ with India and repeatedly talked about ‘flexibility’ and ‘open mindedness’ in his talks with New Delhi. But he urged on India to focus talks on the Kashmir dispute. He expressed his willingness to talk about all other issues as long as they ‘do not dilute the process of dialogue on Kashmir.’ He pressed the need for a change in the mindset in the public as well as in leadership on both sides. He asked to ‘shun rigidity on both sides’ and resolve the Kashmir dispute according to the ‘wishes of Kashmiri people.’ 29

However, amidst much media hype, the summit broke down and remained ‘inconclusive’, as both sides tried to avoid the expression of failure. This was attributed to the inability of two sides to reach a consensus on the semantics on describing ‘centrality of Kashmir dispute’ and ‘cross-border terrorism’ in the proposed joint declaration.

After the summit the relations between the two countries took a worse turn. The relations further aggravated
following the 11 September attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon and Pakistan’s decision to join the US in its fight against terrorism. India was much disturbed by the US reliance on Pakistan for its anti-terrorism campaign in Afghanistan, which has revived Pakistan’s geo-political importance in the region. The situation worsened as amidst threatening statements, India launched a ‘punitive strike’ against Pakistan on the LoC and moved forces to forward positions. In response, President Musharraf declared that the Pakistani Armed Forces were “fully prepared to teach a lesson if India tried to launch an adventure against Pakistan”. The escalation of violence on the LoC broke the 10-month ‘maximum restraint’ in the area.

**Bilateral Talks: Track Record**

Indo-Pakistan track record in negotiating their outstanding conflicts is not very encouraging. In the past, India and Pakistan were able to resolve some of the most difficult conflicts like the Indus Waters dispute (1960), Rann of Kutch issue (1968) only through third party mediation or arbitration. Even the possibility of major conflicts in 1986-87 and in 1990 and 1999 was contained through third party intervention.

There is widespread perception that Indo-Pakistan talks especially on Kashmir are unlikely to produce any desirable results. Scores of rounds of bilateral talks, starting from foreign secretaries to the summit level in the past, have
failed to yield any result. In fact, the October 1998 talks between the foreign secretaries of India and Pakistan, Raghunath and Shamshad Ahmed, formed part of as many as 50 rounds of abortive contacts between the two countries since 1972 at various levels including summit level. At the bilateral level non-military CBMS have not made much headway, except in improving telephonic contact; agreement on double taxation; and some limited progress in travelling and cultural exchanges. Most of the time concrete progress is halted due to bad political relations.

The functioning of bilateral mechanisms is subjected to political vicissitudes. The Indo-Pakistani Joint Commission, a CSBM-like structure created and empowered to deal with a range of issues, was rendered ineffective due to decline in Indo-Pak relations after 1989. The Joint Working Groups are also in a limbo ever since they were created in 1997, again due to worsening of political relations. This is despite the fact that bilateral level is the only level on which the two states have seemingly agreed to conduct meaningful confidence and security building measures.

**Institutionalising Bilateral CBMs**

For this, the following is to be done:

i. Strengthening and strictly implementing military CBMs in the area of communication, notification and mutual transparency.
ii. Operationalising existing Joint Working Groups and empowering foreign & commerce ministers on both sides to conduct negotiations in their respective areas.

iii. Arranging Heads of State meeting as and when required.

iv. Governments on both sides should demonstrate political will to implement the agreed CBMs and go beyond zero-sum paradigm in the region.

v. Governments on both sides should make greater use of Track-II instruments, as so far they have not been given due importance in official dialogue process.

vi. India and Pakistan need to initiate trust & confidence building measures on the Kashmir issue. Conflict avoidance measures need to be formalized to avoid any escalation of tension on the LoC.

vii. Relocation of heavy weapons, which are considered a major cause of tension-escalation across the Line of Control.

viii. Continuous scheduled and unscheduled visits to forward areas by national and other journalists, representatives of national and international human rights organizations, diplomats, defense attaches and UN observers.

ix. Commitment not to violate airspace across the LoC/working boundary.
x. Military commanders of India and Pakistan should meet and explore the reduction of troops from IHK, AJK and NT. Parallel meetings between the heads of intelligence services (ISI & RAW) should take place to ensure peace in areas of their jurisdiction. 31

xi. Strengthening of UNMOGIP to monitor LoC violation on both sides.

On the political side, there is equally urgent need to agree on structured dialogue on Kashmir. This may include:

i. Formalizing structure of dialogue, in terms of mechanism and issues involved in the dispute.

ii. Setting timeframe for structured dialogue on Kashmir.

iii. Initiating intra-Kashmiri dialogue.

iv. involving Kashmiris in bilateral dialogue process on Kashmir.

Unofficial dialogue channels

Non-governmental forums for dialogue between Indian and Pakistanis have proliferated in the 1990s. One of the first such initiatives was The Neemrana Group, named after a fort in Rajasthan where the group's first meeting was held in 1991. The forum consists of academics, retired civil and military officers who have been engaged in discussing Indo-Pakistani relations and possible CBMs. Now there are many more non-governmental channels of communications.
Presently there are more than forty dialogue channels operating in South Asia and about a dozen more outside the region in which South Asians participate on a regular basis. The dialogues can be divided into seven categories based on their objectives, proximity to government, participants and funding sources:

**Track- II Dialogue:** It provides a second line of communication between the states and seek to bridge the gap between official government positions by serving as testing grounds for new policy initiatives. The Track II initiatives have a secret dimension, commonly known as 'back channel diplomacy'. So it is very difficult to evaluate its real contribution to tension reduction. Niaz Naik, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, is very active in Track-II and is widely quoted in the press because of his frequent shuttling between Islamabad and New Delhi at the time of a crisis. It is a well known fact that during the Kargil conflict Niaz Naik travelled to India and conveyed a message of Nawaz Sharif to Indian leadership, which in the opinion of many people helped in defusing the tensions in the region. Track-II became active again to help resume official dialogue between the two countries in the wake of the Kargil conflict. Most of the Track-II activists are high-ranking retired officials on both sides. They have informal contacts with policy makers through personal connections. There is no
institutional mechanism for formal reporting or exchange along the lines, for example, of the track-II processes connected with the ASEAN Regional Forum or the Council for Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific.

**Track-III:** It is principally people-to-people initiatives that seek to build and enhance trans-border links between citizens. These rarely have direct access to the relevant foreign offices but instead aim to change public attitudes and mobilise public pressure on their respective governments to resolve differences and disputes. Most prominent in this process is Pak-India People’s Forum for Peace & Democracy (PIPFPD) set up in 1994).

**Multilateral Dialogues:** Usually on a South-Asia wide basis, these are issue-specific and designed to suggest approaches and policy options for regional institutions, such as SARRC, as well as for individual national governments. These may include Coalition for Action on South Asia Cooperation [CASAC] (1994); Initiative for Pace & Conflict Resolution (1995); South Asia Dialogue (1991); Women Initiative for Peace in South Asia (WIPSA); and South Asia Women’s Forum (1995).

**Business Links:** These include Initiatives that seek to strengthen business links, both at the bilateral and
multilateral levels. Important initiatives are South Asian Business Leaders’ Forum (1995); South Asia Chambers of Commerce & Industry 1993) and Joint Business Council.

**Scholarly Exchange:** Efforts are underway to establish regular scholarly exchange and dialogue activities connecting research Institutes in the region. These include programmes and meetings organised by the Regional Centre for Strategic Studies [RCSS]) (1992), Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad; South Asia Forum for Human Rights [SAFHR) (1992) South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre (1989), and Refugees and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU).

**Dialogue Initiatives from outside South Asia:** Such initiatives are taken with the objective of bringing South Asians closer to one another. These include conferences, exchanges and fellowships organised by the United States Institute of Peace’s (USIP) programme on “Conflict Resolution in South Asia: Creative Approaches to South Asia”. The Stimson Center in Washington; the Program in Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security (ACDIS) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the Asia Society in New York; the Japan-South Asia Forum, Wilton Park conferences, and Chatham House conferences.
Interaction Outside Region: Certain initiatives are going on that involve interaction among South Asian nationals at meetings and fora outside the region. These include the conferences, meetings and training programmes organised outside the region but provide opportunity for the South Asians to meet one another and establish contacts that are valuable channels for informal communication. These may include Shanghai Initiative; Advanced Training Programme in Conflict Resolution organized by Uppasala University, Sweden, and Executive Course organised by Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies under the US Pacific Command in Honolulu.

Most non-official dialogues in the region are at an early stage of development and rarely involve the participation of government officials or pro-active management by them. Their focus is both on military and non-military CBMs, and they tend to give more importance to the later. Opinion in the region is divided about the purpose, efficacy, and legitimacy of different types of non-official dialogues. The informal channels do not have much influence on the policy making or policy makers or public at large. Their primary domain of influence is 'likeminded' groups on the other side, which has restricted their advocacy campaign on CBMs, especially non-military ones. But the very fact that they continue their activities in crisis situations and try to defuse
tension is a commendable effort, which can be treated as an achievement.

Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace & Democracy (PIPFPD) has limited contribution. When asked about the progress of PIPFPD in about six years, I A Rehman, President of Pakistan Chapter of the group, pointed out to the fifth joint convention as, "That itself is significant". 34 Niaz A Naik was also quoted as saying that India and Pakistani had set up a secret channel to try to resolve the Kashmir dispute by the end of the year 1999 and that in order to make progress the two countries decided to avoid working through their foreign offices. Denial of such reports was inevitable but the 'back channel diplomacy' was exposed during the Kargil conflict.35

In June 2001, shortly before the Agra summit, Indian MPs had launched a forum called 'Parliamentarians for South Asian Regional Cooperation', with the objectives to bringing peace to the region, especially between India and Pakistan. The purpose of this forum is to open dialogue with parliamentarians of South Asia as well as the like-minded organizations and to increase people-to-people contact so as to reduce tension and strengthen cooperation among countries of the region.36 The MPs sent letters to Vajpayee and Musharraf urging the two leaders to 'evolve suitable mechanisms to continue the peace process; lift restrictions
on newspapers, magazines and journals; normalise cultural and trade relations; try to find a solution to the Kashmir dispute by involving the people of the state; commit to no further testing, no development, deployment and induction of nuclear weapons; and try to agree to a time bound-programme for the systematic reduction of military spending. 37

After the Kargil conflict, when official lines of communications were dead, an Indian women peace delegation organised by ‘Women Initiative for Peace in South Asia’ (WIPSA) visited Pakistan in March 2000, and even met President Musharraf. In return, a Pakistani women delegation visited India in May 2000 and met Indian officials including Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh. Though the two delegations did not carry any official messages they did break the ice. In May 2000, the PIPFPD organised its fifth convention in Bangalore which provided opportunity for interaction between the civil society organisations of the two countries. In July 2000 an ex-envoy delegation also visited Pakistan at the invitation of PIPFPD. The growth in availability of the Internet has also furthered opportunities for enhanced non-governmental communication between the two countries.

**Institutionalising non-official dialogue**

It is hard to see institutionalisation of non-official dialogue channels, as they are very wide and encompass
diverse activities. The institutionalization of non-official dialogue requires building up of linkages with the governments on the one hand and the public at large on the other. Multi-layered dialogue process operating at several levels simultaneously is required. These would include formal governmental mechanisms, track two meetings on contentious issues and, for the purposes of broader confidence building, a range of track three initiatives at the people-to-people level.

Track-II

Track-II needs to institutionalise linkages with their respective governments so it could impact on official policy making processes on regional security issues.

Needs to take shape as a collective process and not an individualistic exercise as it is largely seen today.

Needs to strengthen its linkages with public at large, including the hardline sections of the society, as both India and Pakistan need to build up domestic constituency for CBMs and eventual conflict resolution.

Track-III

Track-III needs to institutionalize people-to-people dialogues involving hardline constituency in the dialogue process.
Needs to disseminate awareness about tangible benefits of ‘peace economy’ as against economic and social cost of not reducing tensions.

**Multilateral Dialogues**

All non-official multilateral dialogues need to develop linkages within and co-ordinate their initiatives, strategies and findings regarding respective political, strategic and economic issues in the region.

Institutionalise and regularise initiatives that any specific dialogue channel undertakes at bilateral or regional level.

Develop co-operative research projects between institutions where feasible.

**Regional Level Multilateral Dialogues**

At the regional/multilateral level, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) formed in 1985 provides another channel of communication between the Indian and the Pakistani governments and peoples. The SAARC Declaration envisaged and aimed at contributing to building mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another’s problems, and to help promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural and scientific fields.
However, the SAARC has played no role to date in the development of CBMs. This is primarily because all CBMs in South Asia have so far been bilateral and the SAARC Charter states that no 'bilateral and contentious' issues will be discussed under the aegis of SAARC. The main reason why CBMs have not been attempted at a regional level in South Asia, despite the proposals by many analysts, is that "India, the principal power in the region, prefers to conduct its relations with its neighbours along bilateral lines, so as to use its size and power to its greatest advantage." The tension between India and Pakistan overshadows all other regional issues and makes progress on the agenda of SAARC difficult. India's predominance in the region also induces anxieties amongst its smaller neighbours.

However, the SAARC has played limited role in 'quiet diplomacy', such as bilateral meetings between the Indian and Pakistani Heads of Governments, and at times has successfully defused some tensions. On balance, the SAARC has done piecemeal but useful work in the area of non-military cooperation. There has been lot of emphasis on these areas in the discussions in unofficial dialogues and the platform of the SAARC. A number of SAARC conventions have been signed dealing with Food Security (1987 ratified in 1988), Terrorism (1987, ratified in 1988), and Narcotics (1990, ratified in 1993). Arrangements have been made to
encourage people to people exchanges. In 1986, these covered the SAARC Audio-Visual Exchange, arrangements covering University Chairs, Fellowships and Scholarships, and also Youth Volunteers. The SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme was added in 1992. A number of SAARC Centres have been established. These are the Centre on SAARC Documentation in New Delhi (1986), the Centre on Agricultural Information in Dhaka (1998), the Centre on Tuberculosis in Kathmandu (1992) and Centre on Meteorological Research in Dhaka (1995).

On developing economic relations within SARRC, the South Asia Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) was signed in 1993. It came into force in 1995. It is also helped by the SAARC Chambers of Commerce & Industry, which has been operating in Karachi since 1992. It led to subsequent agreement to establish a SAARC Free Trade Area (SAFTA) by 2005. The date was advanced to 2001. But due to political temperatures going up, it is on the halt. The quantum of trade in the region continues to be miniscule compared to potential in the area.

Although SAARC has no parliamentary body, there have been moves to develop inter-parliamentary relations. In June 1992, a meeting took place in Sri Lanka of the Speakers of the Parliaments of the SAARC countries. This

But despite all this institutionalization, a transition from the present intergovernmental cooperation to regional integration is not taking place primarily due to lack of trust and consensus on security issues between India and Pakistan and to a lesser extent between India and the smaller SAARC countries. The eleventh SAARC summit that was proposed to have been held in Kathmandu in 1999 was postponed due to bad relations between India and Pakistan. It should be noted that smaller countries, particularly Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka, have often taken the lead in the past in proposing new regional initiatives.

Institutionalizing Multilateral/Regional Dialogues

The SAARC could be used for discussion on multilateral CSBMs if states found those attractive and the Charter could be changed. Either the states involved do not think SAARC could be useful or they fear opening up a debate on whether CSBMs in South Asia should continue to be solely bilateral or take on a more multilateral, regional character. Nonetheless, there is urgent need to improve
the scope and functioning of the SAARC. Some of the suggestions may include:

i. Expanding the scope of the Charter to include security issues or set up a separate forum on the lines of ASEAN Regional Forum to address contentious political issues as well as regional security issues.

ii. Improving informal consultation on bilateral issues within the regional framework.

iii. Making efforts to remove negative security and political perception through informal dialogue in SAARC’s leaders meetings.

iv. Improving mechanisms in SAARC. The ministerial level meetings have been unable to break the deadlocks. It is left to the leaders to break the ice in the annual summits that sometimes are postponed due to political reasons. Such postponements became a setback to concrete steps for cooperation in South Asia. It is imperative for SAARC to rearrange its meetings by giving more authority to the foreign ministers and commerce ministers to conduct negotiations.

v. Strengthening the role of Secretary General. At present the Secretary General is a coordinator and simply reports matters to the Head of State. His
responsibility is 1) Coordinating & monitoring implementation of SAARC activities. 2) Preparing for and service SAARC meetings & 3) Serving as channel of communication between the Association and other regional organizations. To make SAARC an effective organization is to empower the Secretary General with sufficient tasks. He should be able to 1) Initiate and advise SAARC activities, 2) Develop and provide regional perspective on subjects and issues before SAARC, 3) monitor the implementation of the Integrated Programme of Action and submit recommendations as and when necessary to the Standing Committee, and offer assessment and recommendations on SAARC’s external relations.

vi. Strengthening of the role of SAARC Secretariat enabling it to play a leadership role in averting various misgivings and misperceptions in the region.

vii. Implementation of various SAARC conventions, such as on terrorism, drug and food security.

viii. Growth Quadrangles and Triangles initiatives within SAARC not to be politically motivated rather needed to be based on mutual interests, potentials and sharing of benefits. Besides, multilateral economic projects such as Ganges Basin Development project need to be encouraged.
Linkage between Institutionalisation of the CBMs and Security Cooperation

Despite mixed record, CBMs are emerging in South Asia as a middle course between using force and resolving fundamental issues. Since 1990, India and Pakistan have used CSBMs "as instruments for stabilising, softening, and perhaps even terminating their own cold wars, and thus have avoided costly shooting wars." An institutionalized CBM regime supported by multi-layered dialogue process operating at several levels simultaneously would tremendously boost security cooperation in the South Asian region. These could include formal governmental mechanisms, track-II and track-III dialogue processes.

Building trust in the mind and heart of the people and governments is essential for implementation of CBMs that are more technical and military in nature. The implementation of CBMs agreed upon at the bilateral level in letter and spirit, especially in the security arena, can play crucial role in improving objective conditions for security cooperation in the region. They would also facilitate conflict resolution in the region and provide impetus to CBMs in the non-military area.

The non-official dialogues could be geared at developing an alternative framework for security cooperation in the region. South Asia remains as one of the world's most
dangerous flashpoints for escalating conflict and one of the poorest regions. The governments of the two countries are stuck in traditional approaches of security which rests on 'national interest' defined in terms of military security alone. The 'people-centred approach' in the security arena is missing. The institutionalization of non-official dialogue process and their greater interaction with governments and people is likely to broaden their space in the policy making and implementation on issues encompassing security as well as economic and cultural cooperation.

Multilateral and institutionalized approach under the forum of SAARC is entirely missing. Even security issues are not discussed. Smaller states pin a lot of hopes on this regional forum and want to energize by playing active part in it. But due to deadlock between India and Pakistan it is not happening. SAARC has even ceased to play effective role in the non-military cooperation area. The fact that even holding a summit often becomes problematic should be a cause for worry to those who really want economic and security cooperation in the region. There is greater need to put life into SAARC

Conclusion

Institutional arrangements appear to be most difficult to be accomplished and, more importantly, to sustain.
Bilateral, non-official and regional channels could work in tandem to advance conflict avoidance and confidence building measures in the region. The leaderships of India and Pakistan will have to take greater responsibility for ensuring the proper implementation of the existing CBMs in deed and in spirit.

The future of CSBMs can only manifest meaningfully if these are implemented with sincerity and unstinting political will towards genuine conflict resolution and comprehensive peace and security. It is fundamental, therefore, that “the nexus of peace, security and CBMs is recognised and the linkage of nuclear risk, conventional force restraint and conflict resolution is duly acknowledged.” The people of South Asia deserve a better deal, especially by their respective governments.

Endnotes


3 Dr Moonis Ahmar, “Confidence-building measures between India and Pakistan” op.cit.

5 Shakil Sheikh, “Pakistan not informed by India of air power games”, The News, 4 March 1999. India announced this FPD (fire-power demonstration) a few months after it conducted its largest wargame in a decade near Pakistan’s border, with the involvement of more than 100,000 troops backed by armour, artillery and warplanes. Though from November 1998 to end-January 1999 integrated wargames by India were conducted with supply of prior information to Pakistan, this time the Indians have not done so. In the Pokhran desert, India has three air force bases at Jaisalmer, Jodhpur and Bikaner and any fighter aircraft taking off from these bases may fly into ten nautical miles of the international border.

6 ibid.


8 Ibid. pp. 2-3.


11 Feroz Hassan Khan, op. cit.

12 Dr Maleeha Lodhi, “Managing Risk: The acme of skill”, op.cit.


The regime envisages conflict resolution steps and measures for stabilisation in nuclear, missile and conventional forces. The package has three components dealing with peace, security and the CBMs. The Component relating to peace involves identification of the issues that threaten peace; developing consensus on the mechanism for their settlement, and conclusion of an agreement on non-use of force.

The security element envisages restraint of demonstrated capabilities in a manner that reassures security to the extent that is critical to ensuring peace. Restraint and stabilisation in turn has two elements — nuclear restraint and stabilisation and conventional restraint and stabilisation. While the former involves prevention of nuclear and ballistic missile race; risk reduction mechanisms; avoidance of nuclear conflict; formalising moratorium on nuclear testing; non-induction of ABM and SLBM systems, and nuclear doctrine of minimum deterrent capability, the latter envisages mutual and balanced reduction of forces and armament. The CBMs are intrinsically linked with the first two elements. This includes review of existing CBMs and other measures; measures for the prevention of violations of airspace and territorial waters; revival of pre-Simla ground border rules; prior notification of military exercises; enhancing the efficacy of and upgrading the existing communication links between DGMOs and activation of existing hotlines between the prime ministers; and restraint on hostile propaganda.
Prime Minister Vajpayee announced that Pakistani passport holders would be allowed to come to India by road and obtain visa at the Attari-check point in Punjab. An additional check post would be opened at Munabao in Rajasthan for this purpose. Similar check post would also be opened at designated points along the International border and the LoC in J&K.


"India eases visa regime for Pak passport holders", The Tribune, Chandigarh 10 July 2001.


Shakil Shaikh, "India to be paid back in same coin", The News, 23 October 2001. DGMOS of Pakistan has contacted his counterpart on Hotline and expressed Pakistan's deep concerns about unusual movements of the Indian Armed Forces. The ISPR said that Pakistan Armed Forces have taken necessary measures keeping in view the unusual movements by the Indian armed forces in the last few days. "Pakistan takes up troops movement with India", Nation, Islamabad, 24 October 2001.


Umer Farooq, "Track-II diplomacy under way despite disclaimers", Nation, Islamabad, 4 April 2000.


Harihar Swarup, “Master of back channel diplomacy”, Tribune, Chandigarh, 10 April 2000.

“MPs launch a forum for South Asia peace”, The Asian Age, Delhi, 11 July 2001.

ibid.


Ibid.


Feroz Hassan Khan, op.cit.