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BETWEEN OFFENCE AND DEFENSE: ANALYZING PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR DOCTRINE

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Abstract

In a post-Cold War unipolar world, the overt nuclearisation of India and Pakistan in the South Asia region has added urgency to the ongoing debate on nuclear proliferation and its ramifications for the region itself as well as on the rest of the world. Pakistan, like its arch rival, India, has opted for the path of nuclear weaponisation in 1998 and since then has taken tangible steps to devise policy formulations related to nuclear strategy. The conceptualization of nuclear deterrence for two South Asian rival countries with deep rooted historical animosities and regional ambitions might be an uphill task unlike the case of the United States and former Soviet Union during the Cold War years when both the countries stayed broadly within the perimeter of deterrence. The paper surmised that with the shaping of nuclear doctrines of Pakistan and India in place, it was hoped that a peace constituency could hopefully take firm hold in South Asia in making sure the proactive peace process currently underway between India and Pakistan was irreversible.

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In a post-Cold War unipolar world, the overt nuclearisation of India and Pakistan in South Asia region has added urgency to the ongoing debate on nuclear proliferation and its ramifications for the region itself as well as on the rest of the world. Pakistan, like its arch rival, India, has opted for the path of nuclear weaponisation in 1998 and since then has taken tangible steps to devise policy formulations related to nuclear strategy.

The paper analyzes, evaluates and investigates Pakistan's nuclear doctrine by critically examining the following aspects: (a) Nuclear First Strike Option versus No First Use; (b) Institutional arrangements related to setting up of nuclear command; (c) delineating the notion of nuclear threshold; and (d) the viability of Limited War. Specific proposals floated by Pakistan toward strategic restraint regime will also be analyzed. Finally, the paper will address the current peace dialogue between India and Pakistan and how that could affect latter's strategic perspective in the long term.

Contextualising the Concept of Deterrence

Concept of deterrence assumes significance in military strategic discourse when one or the other state in the same neighborhood acquires nuclear weapons. Within the deterrence literature, deterrence by denial, according to Glenn Snyder, is premised on the failure of deterrence and the preparedness by the other party to this eventuality.[1] The other version of the deterrence by denial is by denying the adversary the specific military advantage it might want to respond through an overwhelming force of its own. Michael Howard has defined deterrence as a policy that seeks to persuade an adversary, through the actual threat of military retaliation, that the costs of using military force to resolve political conflict will outweigh the benefits derived from it.[2] Deterrence theory assumes that there is a certain

[1] Snyder, Glenn, *Deterrence and Defense: Twards a Theory of National Security*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1961.

[2] Howard, Michael, "Reassurance and Deterrence: Western Doctrine in the 1980s", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 1, 1982/83, p.315; also, see, Rajain,

measure of transparency of interests and capability inherent in a state's action and in its response in a given strategic situation that are of supreme national importance. In contrast, the theory of deterrence by punishment seeks to prevent aggression by threat of punitive retaliation. US strategic policy in the 1950s with its emphasis on massive retaliation and assured destruction are examples of deterrence by punishment.[3]

In the context of South Asia, Pakistan's nuclear doctrine relies in part on both: deterrence by denial as well as deterrence by punishment. What makes Pakistan's strategic policy bit ambiguous is neither of these concepts been articulated or explored fully to its operational limits *vis-a-vis* India's nuclear strategy.

Genesis of India's Nuclear Doctrine

Way back in 1974, India conducted a nuclear test that it termed a 'peaceful nuclear explosion'. However, in 1998, India conducted a full scale nuclear test and claimed to attain nuclear capability which was followed soon by its neighbor, Pakistan, also opting for the same nuclear route. A year later, in August 1999, the draft on nuclear doctrine was presented to the Indian Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Later, the same was released for public debate by the National Security Advisory Board.

The nuclear doctrine of India was perhaps the first of its kind among the known nuclear weapon states of the world, and India prepared the expansive draft nuclear doctrine document before obtaining capability mentioned in it. This draft, with minor alternations, became India's nuclear doctrine on January 4, 2003 when the Cabinet Committee on Security Affairs (CSA) reviewed and approved the operationalisation of India's nuclear doctrine. The

Arpit, *Nuclear Deterrence in Southern Asia*, London: Sage Publishers, 2005, p.63

[3] Dulles, John Foster, "Challenge and Response in US Policy", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 1968, pp. 62-64; also, see, McNamara, Robert S., *The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1968, p. 52.

following are the salient points of India's and Pakistan's nuclear doctrine put in a comparative perspective.[4]

- India's strategic perspective for its nuclear doctrine encompasses a wider latitude than South Asia in keeping with its strategic potential. Pakistan's perspective as presently evident seems to be India-specific.
- India proclaims 'no-first-use' as a matter of principle. Pakistan is averse to this. It would not give any such guarantees, feeling that a bland 'no-first use' policy invalidates its deterrence against India.
- India's nuclear weapons system will be "TRIAD" based (land based ballistic missiles, sea based assets and air borne platforms). Pakistan currently possesses land based and aircraft delivery systems.
- Both, Indian and Pakistani nuclear doctrines emphasize a 'credible minimum deterrent'. However, Pakistani capabilities, in this regard, may be questionable.
- India's nuclear arsenal will be under civil political control at all times. Pakistan's nuclear arsenal will be under *de-facto* control of the Army Chief.
- India will not resort to use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons state or those not aligned with nuclear weapon powers. Pakistan has not made any such explicit pledge in its nuclear policy.

Evolution of Pakistan's Nuclear Program and Z.A. Bhutto

The key decision whether Pakistan should embark on a 'coherent nuclear program' was discussed for the first time in 1963, though its deterrence value was emphasized by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto publicly for

[4] Kapila, Subhash, "India and Pakistan Nuclear Doctrine: A Comparative Analysis", Article No. 260, New Delhi: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, September 15, 1999; also, available at http://www.ipcs.org/newKashmirLevel2.jsp?action=showView&kValue=573&subCatID=null&mod=null

the first time in 1965.[5] To quote him, "All wars of our age have become total wars and it will have to be assumed that a war waged against Pakistan is capable of becoming a total war...and our plan should, therefore, include the nuclear deterrent."[6] After the Chinese nuclear tests in 1964, Pakistan was apprehensive that India would go nuclear. Bhutto, who was then a member in Ayub Khan's cabinet stated, "If India developed an atomic bomb, we too will develop one 'even if we have to eat grass or leaves or to remain hungry' because there is no conventional alternative to the atomic bomb."[7] Two aspects of his statement are noteworthy. First is its linkage to India and the second is his emphasis on atomic bomb as the ultimate weapon.

The independence of Bangladesh (former East Pakistan) in 1971 and the subsequent 1974 nuclear tests by India led to a serious rethinking among Pakistan's strategic elites that ultimately paved the way for paradigm shift in South Asian security environment.

Pakistan's Nuclear Command

With Pakistan opting for the nuclear weaponisation in the summer of 1998, it also established the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) in February 2000 with three components: an Employment Control Committee, the Development Control Committee and the Strategic Plans Division. Pakistan also set up a nuclear regulatory authority to bring proper coordination in its nuclear program. NCA is responsible for policy formulation, employment and development control over all strategic nuclear forces and strategic organizations. Besides President Musharraf, the NCA includes foreign affairs, defense and interior ministers, chiefs of all military services and heads of strategic

[5] Z. A. Bhutto's statement in the National Assembly of Pakistan, see, *The National Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, 3 (1-13), May 30, 1974, third session of 1974, p.304.

[6] Bhutto, Z. A., *Myth or Realities*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1969, p.153.

[7] Cited in Cheema, Pervez Iqbal, "Nuclear Development in Pakistan: Future Directions", in P.R.Chari *et al*. *Nuclear Non-Proliferation in India and Pakistan*, Manohar; Delhi, 1996, p.105; also, see, Smruti S. Pattnaik, "Pakistan's Nuclear Strategy", *Strategic Analysis*, New Delhi, January-March 2003, Vol. 27, No. 1, pp. 94-114.

organizations. At a review session in November 27, 2000, the NCA reviewed the strategic and security environment facing Pakistan and took important decisions on nuclear policy matters that included, amongst others, strategic threat perception, restructuring of the strategic organizations and export control mechanisms.[8]

Pakistan's Thinking on No First Use

Pakistan has, so far, shown little interest in the idea of No First Use (NFU). Perhaps the closest Pakistan has officially come to accepting the language of no first use was in the summer of 2002, when India and Pakistan confronted each other in the wake of the Kaluchak massacre in Jammu and Kashmir. In response to Indian threats to retaliate conventionally to the massacre, Pakistan stated that it would respond forcefully in turn, hinting that it was prepared to use nuclear weapons as a first choice. Shortly, thereafter, Islamabad publicly clarified, apparently under US pressure, that responding to an Indian attack did not mean nuclear use, presumably first use, against India.

Among non-officials, those who oppose weaponization as well as those who support a minimum deterrent would probably support NFU, the former as an interim confidence-building measure in the transition to nuclear disarmament and the latter in order to keep the nuclear arsenal small and to signal moderation and restraint. Most prominently, Pervez Hoodbhoy has suggested that India and Pakistan should, as part of a bilateral nuclear treaty, agree to no first use. Hoodbhoy argues that NFU would actually benefit Pakistan. NFU would be an investment in stability and survival. In case of nuclear war, Pakistan would lose much more than India since New Delhi can inflict much greater nuclear damage (and presumably absorb much greater loss). [9]

[8] See, www.stratfor.com, December 7, 2000; also, see, "Pakistan Sets up N-arms Command", *The Times of India*, New Delhi, November 28, 2000; also, "Musharraf to Head Pak Nuclear Command", *The Statesman*, Kolkata, February 4, 2000. "India's Nuclear Command to be in Place", *The Times of India*, New Delhi, May 23, 2002.

[9] Pugwash Meeting No. 279; Kanti Bajpai, "No First Use of Nuclear Weapons" available at www.pugwash.org/reports/nw.bajpai.htm

Pakistani skepticism or opposition to NFU seems to arise from the following concerns. In contrast to India, Pakistan's thinking on a no first use/first use policy is almost completely military-strategic and country specific (India). First of all, there are some in Pakistan, as in India and elsewhere in the world, who doubt the efficacy and practicality of an NFU. Can Pakistan rely on India's leadership to abide by a no first use commitment? Is there any way of verifying in absolute sense that an adversary is committed to no first use?

Secondly, even if NFU was credible, acceptance of it would mean permanent Pakistani strategic inferiority and opening up wider window of vulnerability. Given Pakistan's inferiority in conventional forces *vis-a-vis* India, the threat of first use is vital to its deterrence against India, while the actual use of nuclear weapons first may be vital to defense if and when deterrence fails.

Thirdly, there is a line of more offensive-minded Pakistani thinking that vehemently opposes an NFU. According to this view, first use is intrinsic to Pakistan's exploitation of the 'stability-instability' situation in South Asia. Protected by nuclear weapons, Pakistan is free to choose sub-conventional conflict with India, as in Kashmir: fearing Pakistani first use, India cannot cross the line of control in Kashmir or the international boundary further south as a way of punishing Pakistan for its interference in Kashmir. These Pakistani strategists regard Pakistan's support of cross-border terrorism in Kashmir since the late 1980s, the Kargil war in 1999, and the crisis of May-June 2002 as validating the correctness of their analysis. In spite of Pakistani provocations, India chose not to retaliate across the line of control or the international boundary.

Pakistan's First Strike Option

In order to maintain 'strategic balance' Pakistan taking note of India's overwhelming superiority in conventional arms and manpower may be tempted to go in for escalation with a first strike option. Pakistan is very likely to exercise this option to counter India should the latter pose a serious threat to Pakistan's territorial integrity leading

to its dismemberment and further fragmentation.[10] Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf while proclaiming to be in full control of his nation's strategic assets did not hesitate to threaten India to use nuclear weapons in the event of latter violating the "line of control or the international border."[11] In this context, it is worth mentioning the comments made by General Khalid Kidwai, Head of the Strategic Plan Division of the Pakistan's Army:

> Nuclear weapons are aimed solely at India. In case, deterrence fails, they will be used, if,
> a. India attacks Pakistan and conquer a large part of its territory(space threshold);
> b. India destroys a large part of its land or air forces (military threshold);
> c. India proceeds to the economic strangling of Pakistan (economic threshold);
> d. India pushes Pakistan into political destabilization or creates a large internal subversion in Pakistan (domestic destabilization).[12]

Pakistan, however, is acutely aware of asymmetry in military balance in South Asia. Even Pakistan resorting to a limited war with salami slicing tactics have the potential of backfire. In the words of General Jehangir Karamat, a former Chief of Army of Pakistan, "Pakistan accepts the imbalance inherent in the equation with India and will not seek to match capabilities. Pakistan, will, therefore, modernise and upgrade its military power in carefully selected areas so

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[10] "India's Nuclear Command to be in place", *The Times of India*, May 23, 2002.

[11] "Pakistan's Nuclear Gamble: A Deadly Ploy", Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, January 17, 2003, New Delhi, available at www.ipcs.org

[12] Lieutenant General Sardar Lodhi, F.S; (Retd). "Pakistan's Nuclear Doctrine", *Pakistan Defense Journal*, 1999; also, see, Brigadier Ismat, Saeed (Retd.), "Strategy for Total Defense: A Conceptual Nuclear Doctrine", *Pakistan Defense Journal*, March 2000; Zafar Iqbal Cheema, "Pakistan's Nuclear Use Doctrine and Command and Control" in Peter R. Lavoy, Scott D. Sagan, and James J. Wirtz (eds.), *Planning the Unthinkable: How New Powers will Use Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Weapons*, London: Cornell University Press, 2000.

that its deterrent and defense capabilities are not degraded and it never faces a scenario of overwhelming strategic superiority from India. This deterrence is the best guarantee of stability because an unacceptable imbalance can have serious implications."[13]

Pakistan's interest in first use may in part be supported by a calculation that if there are first uses of nuclear weapons against India that would not necessarily invite nuclear retaliation. Stephen P. Cohen, an internationally renowned security analyst, suggests that the Pakistani army has conceived of a five-rung escalation ladder.[14] Four of these involve the threat of first use or actual first use:

- Private and public warnings to India not to move its forces threateningly
- A demonstration explosion on Pakistani territory to deter India from a conventional attack
- The use of a 'few' nuclear weapons on Pakistani territory against intruding Indian forces
- Nuclear strikes against 'critical' Indian military targets, preferably in areas with low population and without much by way of infrastructure.

Of these four, according to Cohen, the first two could well avoid Indian retaliation altogether since they would be carried out in Pakistan and would not target Indian assets. The second two, Pakistani planners might calculate, would be more provocative but might still not cause India to unleash a full retaliatory strike.

Viability of Limited War

Some analysts have raised specter of limited war in the context of India and Pakistan going nuclear due to miscalculation and misperception. Even limited war, in conventional sense, between India and Pakistan can escalate into nuclear conflict. Traditionally, a limited war is likely to have the following key features:

[13] Jehangir Karamat, "South Asian Stability – A Pakistan Perspective", Pugwash Meeting No.277, Pugwash Group on South Asian Security, Geneva, November 1-3, 2002.

[14] Cohen, Stephen P, *The Pakistan Army*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp.177-79.

1. It is likely to be limited in a geographical sense, although in terms of numbers of personnel involved, types of weapons used and duration of conflict it might be unlimited in scope and actual use.
2. It is also likely to be limited in terms of its objectives within a strategic space using calibrated use of force, i.e., between initiating an armed conflict and an all-out war.
3. It may be limited from the perspectives of the initiator of the conflict, though this may not necessarily be the case with the defender.

However, four factors can turn any conventional conflict, however, 'limited' in nature, into acquiring a nuclear dimension.[15]

a. The politico-military objectives which India considers limited, might be considered unlimited and unacceptable by Pakistan. Islamabad plans to use nuclear weapons in the event of a deep military offensive by India. How 'deep' would be deep enough for India to obtain its objective, and how 'deep' would be too much for Pakistan, is unclear and will always remain so. Issue of extent of loss of territory, image and legitimacy are important.
b. Pakistan's military has shown a greater inclination towards a possible use of nuclear weapon. In Pakistan, nuclear command and control are exclusively in the hands of the military. Faced with significant conventional asymmetry and seeming evidence of a conventional attack by India, the Pakistani decision makers may be tempted to threaten the first use of nuclear weapons.
c. In the case of India and Pakistan, inadequate command and control structures, deficient early warning arrangements and perceptions about a doubtful capacity to launch a retaliatory 'second strike' send mixed signals which enhance the risk of a nuclear exchange.

[15] See, Albright, David; "Securing Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Complex", October 2001, www.isis-online/publications/terrorism/stanleypaper.html; also, see, Landau Network. http://www.mi.infn.it/~landnet; cotta@mi.infn.it; Sumit Ganguly and Kent Biringer; "Nuclear Crisis-Stability in South Asia", in Lowell Dittmer (ed.), *South Asia's Nuclear Security Dilemma: India, Pakistan, and China*, New York, M.E.Sharpe, 2005, p.32; Rajain Arpit, *op. cit.*, p.90.

d. A possible reappraisal of India's operational doctrine can further encourage Pakistan to take recourse to atomic weapons even in conventional warfare.

Issue of Hot Line

Another aspect related to Pakistan's nuclear doctrine is the issue of 'hot line' that was restarted among the leaders at the highest level in both Islamabad and New Delhi following a 20-year gap in 1997 is in disuse now. Although some movement has been made in this regard during the June 19-20, 2004 meeting at the foreign secretaries level, yet no firm time table has been set as to when the Hot Lines might be activated and operational. According to Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy, Professor of Physics at the Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad, Pakistan,

> Should a nuclear war occur, it may well be that the order is not given by the Chief Executive or the Prime Minister or whoever. That decision may be taken by a Brigadier, who will decide whether you and I live or die. Any missiles fired by India or Pakistan would take four to eight minutes to hit its target. This means both countries are prepared to launch a nuclear strike on the basis of a warning. In a few hundred seconds, the credibility of the warning must be gauged. Is it the blip on the radar screen really a missile? If so, is it, likely to be carrying a nuclear warhead? An alert must then be flashed to the strategic command center. And, if necessary, a launch order transmitted to the missile site.[16]

It is hoped that in the coming months, a decision to activate hot line at the highest level be taken as has been done already at the area commander level along the entire India-Pakistan border.

Possibility of Theft or Diversion of Fissile materials

Like in any nuclear weapon state, multiple vulnerabilities exist in a nuclear weapons complex.[17] In case of Pakistan, it is possible that

[16] Quoted by M. V. Ramana and C. Rammanohar Reddy (ed.), *Prisoners of the Nuclear Dream*, London, Orient Longman, 2003, p.21.

[17] Albright, *op. cit.,* p.15. "The Day After in India, Pak:12 million dead", *Indian Express*, New Delhi, May 28, 2002.

groups or individuals may violate security rules for a variety of reasons, including profit making, settling a vendetta, or religious or ideological motives. Rogue elements may try to gain control over sensitive items for their own use or to transfer these items to another state or to other non-state actors for financial or ideological reasons.

The threat of theft or diversion of fissile material or nuclear weapons falls into three general areas:

- **Outsider Threat**--The possibility that armed individuals or groups from outside a facility gain access and steal nuclear weapons, weapons components or fissile material.
- **Insider Threat**--The possibility that individuals who work inside the facility will remove fissile material, nuclear weapons, or weapons components without proper authorization.
- **Insider/Outsider Threat**--The possibility that insiders and outsiders conspire together in connivance to obtain fissile materials, weapons, or weapon components.

If Pakistan suffers extreme instability or civil war, additional threats to its strategic nuclear assets are also possible:

- **Loss of Central Control of Storage Facilities**--Clear lines of communication code and control over weapons, weapons components, and fissile material may be broken or lost entirely.
- **Coup**--In the most extreme case, a coup takes place and the new regime attempts to gain control of the entire nuclear complex. It is also possible that foreign government(s) may intervene to prevent hostile entity from seizing the strategic nuclear assets.

In the current situation, Pakistan must also increasingly worry that experts from the nuclear complex could steal sensitive information or assist nuclear weapons programs of other countries or terrorist groups. The information could include highly classified nuclear weapons data, exact storage locations of weapons or fissile material, access control

arrangements, or other sensitive, operational details about these weapons.

Issue of Disaster Management

There is no reference in Pakistan's nuclear doctrine as to the appropriate disaster control system in case of a potential accident. Pakistan, at the present time, does not have anything even close to the capabilities of managing a nuclear disaster, should it occur either from a nuclear first strike or from a retaliatory strike by the adversary.

In a chilling report published by Britain based *NEW SCIENTISTS*, it was reported that a massive loss of men and materials would occur should a nuclear exchange take place between India and Pakistan. As per this report, at least 2.9 million people would be killed and another 1.4 million severely injured. The calculation is based on the possible use of 10 Hiroshima type bombs, 5 in India (Bangalore, Mumbai, Kolkata, New Delhi, Chennai) and 5 in Pakistan (Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Islamabad, Rawalpindi). In comparative terms, Indian side will suffer 1.5 million dead and 900,000 injured, while Pakistan side 1.2 million dead and 600,000 injured. If the bomb explodes on the ground instead of in the air, resulting radioactive dust could kill more people. Due to prevailing winds from west to east, India would incur more casualties than Pakistan. This is just ten bombs, which is $1/10^{th}$ of estimated nuclear bomb both the countries are believed to have possessed.[18]

Another report provided even a more frightening picture. "Nuclear exchange could kill up to 12 million people at one stroke plus injury up to 7 million. Even a so-called 'limited war' would have cataclysmic effect overhauling hospitals across South Asia and requiring vast foreign assistance to battle radioactive contamination, famine and disease. More deaths would occur later caused by urban firestones, ignited by the heat of a nuclear exchange, deaths from longer term radiation, or the disease and starvation expected to spread."[19]

[18] "The Day After in India, Pak:12 million dead", *Indian Express*, New Delhi, India, May 28, 2002.
[19] Ibid.

In this regard, India's Home Ministry is currently raising eight battalions to tackle natural disasters and combat nuclear, biological and chemical warfare. In all likelihood, Pakistan is expected to follow India's path in having a National Emergency Response Force to be deployed in strategic locations under the supervision of the director-general of civil defense should such contingencies arise.

Pakistan's Current Missile Capability and India's Cold Start Strategy

Jane Intelligence Review's report published in March 26, 2001, has stated that Pakistan, India's traditional adversary, has nearly completed development of a solid fuel missile that could strike key Indian cities from deep within Pakistan territory through Ghauri-series of liquid propelled missiles in an offensive operation and Shaheen-series weapons as defensive measures.

On May 24, 2002, Pakistan also tested a Ghauri missile that has a range of 1,500 kilometers (1,000 miles) that can hit most populous cities of Northern, Central and Western India. The father of the Pakistan bomb, Dr. A. Q. Khan, in a declaration has asserted that Ghauri missiles could "wipe out thrice, all the big cities of India."[20] On June 4, 2004, Pakistan also successfully tested Hatf-V and Ghauri-1. India, on the other hand, on June 13, 2004, has successfully tested Brahmos, the supersonic cruise missile that can travel at Mach 2.823 and which has been configured to be launched from land, ship, sub-marine and aircraft using liquid ramjet technology. Furthermore, India has developed capability to test Agni-III missile which can hit objects within the range of 3000 miles and, thus, the entire territorial space of Pakistan can be within India's missile range. In addition, India's Armed Forces have formulated joint war doctrine to ensure that individual combat capabilities of Army, Navy and Air Force can come together in the event of war. It remains to be seen whether and when

[20] See, URL: www.rediff.com accessed October 5, 2001; also, see, *The Times of India*, New Delhi, November 10, 2003.

Pakistan will match India's cruise missile and related capabilities so as not to provide its rival a strategic edge.

Similarly, India's new Cold Start Strategy that became operational with major military exercise VAJRA SHAKTI in May 2005 has been of concern to Pakistan's nuclear establishment. Under the Cold Start Strategy, India could retaliate with nuclear weapons if its armed forces were subjected to nuclear, chemical or biological strikes, and this could have profound strategic impact on Pakistan's nuclear doctrine. Although Cold Start Strategy was in place under the North Atlantic alliance, a similar replication in the South Asian context might have serious implications thus further endangering the strategic environment of the region.

Towards a Strategic Restraint Regime

Perhaps, what is needed is a level of transparency and credible approach. To Pakistan's credit, at the October 1998 talks at the foreign minister level, Pakistan proposed a framework for what was called a strategic restraint regime.[21] The framework included:

- a non-aggression pact;
- the prevention of a nuclear weapons and ballistic missile race;
- risk reduction mechanisms such as nuclear risk reduction centers;
- avoidance of nuclear conflict;
- formalizing moratoria on nuclear testing;
- non-induction of anti-ballistic missile systems and submarine-launched ballistic missiles; and
- formal nuclear doctrines of minimum deterrent capability.

Pakistan also proposed mutual and balanced reduction of forces in the conventional field. India matched these proposals by offering a framework consisting of:

- no-first-use pledges;
- agreement on preventing nuclear war, including accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons;

[21] Farah Zahra, "Pakistan's Road to a Minimum Nuclear Deterrent", *Arms Control Today*, Washington, DC, July/August 1999, also, available at http://www.armscontrol.org/act/1999_07-08/fzja99.asp? print

- extension of agreements prohibiting attack against nuclear installations;
- advance notification of ballistic missile tests; and
- verification of nuclear related data exchange.

In this context, Michael Krepon, South Asia strategist at the Washington DC based Henry Stimson Center has outlined a viable ten key commandments to reduce the risks of nuclear escalation:[22]

- Don't change or alter the territorial status quo in sensitive areas by use of force
- Avoid nuclear brinkmanship on both sides
- Avoid dangerous and threatening military practice
- Put in place special reassurance measures for ballistic missiles and other nuclear forces
- Implement properly mutual and international treaty obligations, risk-reduction, and confidence-building measures
- Agree on verification arrangements, including intrusive and comprehensive monitoring
- Establish reliable lines of communication, between political leaders and between military leaders
- Establish conventional and reliable command and control arrangements as well as intelligence-gathering capabilities to know what the other side is up to, especially in a crisis
- Keep working hard on these arrangements. Improve them. Don't take anything for granted
- Hope for plan dumb luck or divine intervention

Conclusion

In the shadow of Pakistan's nuclear doctrine lies the perennial issue of Kashmir which is the bone of contention between India and Pakistan since 1947. Since volatility over Kashmir may yet provide a flash point, that possibility may induce both countries to come to a negotiating table and to opt for nuclear deterrence and quick implementation of 'enforceable and verifiable' confidence-building measures which may include simultaneous signing of CTBT and other international safeguards. The statement made by Gen. Pervez

[22] For more details on Ten Commandments, see, Michael Krepon, 'The Stability-Instability Paradox, Misperception, and Escalation Control in South Asia,' *The Henry L. Stimson Center*, May 2003, p.8.

Musharraf on December 18, 2003 to be flexible on Kashmir issue and be ready to bend on his UN Kashmir baggage by keeping aside UN Security Council Resolution is a welcome sign and should be explored further. Elaborating his vision for the resolution of the long tangled Kashmir problem, Musharraf outlined a four-step approach. It involves recognition of the centrality of Kashmir for the settlement of all disputes between India and Pakistan, commencement of a dialogue on that basis, elimination of solutions not acceptable to India, Pakistan and Kashmiris, and initiating the process for finding a solution acceptable to all parties.[23]

Along with it, the following confidence-building measures (CBMs) at the non-military level could be pursued in right earnest.

- Unofficial dialogue through Track-II level should be encouraged by the two governments to assist official-level talks between India and Pakistan
- Measures to develop commerce and trade such as, having a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), Granting Most Favored Nations (MFN) status, Evolving a common currency, etc
- Bus service between Srinagar and Muzafarabad linking both Indian and Pakistan sides of the Line of Control (LoC) across the Kashmir valley that began in April 2005 to continue for the foreseeable future.

Similarly, on Siachen glacier along the Kashmir front, the world's highest battlefield, CBM talks could be initiated geared toward demilitarization and firm commitment made by both India and Pakistan to stop aggressive maneuvers, avoid lateral movement of troops on the glacier and declare Siachen as a mountain of peace.

Second, India's former foreign minister, K. Natwar Singh's proposal to evolve and study the feasibility of a common nuclear doctrine between India, China and Pakistan in order to bring peace and stability to the region could be explored further. Third, CBMs and related negotiations including the feasibility of common pipeline between Iran, Pakistan and India for enhanced energy cooperation that

[23] See, *Indian Express*, New Delhi, December 19, 2003; Also, see, *The Hindu*, Chennai, December 19, 2003.

was agreed upon by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Pervez Musharraf in New Delhi on April 16-18, 2005, could be pursued more aggressively.

Another measure that could be tried is the concerted efforts on the part of the permanent members of the UN Security Council to act as honest facilitators "to help in ushering a common, strategic dialogue and language on arms control in South Asia"[24] and foster open communication among the parties concerned. But then, the concept of nuclear deterrence for two South Asian rival countries with deep rooted historical animosities and regional ambitions might be an uphill task unlike the case of the United States and former Soviet Union during the Cold War years when both the countries stayed broadly within the perimeter of deterrence. With the shaping of nuclear doctrines of Pakistan and India, it was hoped that a peace constituency could hopefully take firm hold in South Asia. Similarly, it was also hoped that the proactive peace process currently underway between India and Pakistan would turn into an irreversible one.

Six elements are of critical importance in sustaining the process of ongoing dialogue between India and Pakistan.[25] The first one is the preservation of agreements and CBMs (military and non-military) instituted so far between India and Pakistan. Second one is the promotion of the resolution of disputes so that peace process gains momentum and transforms into a conflict resolution mode. Third one is a problem-solving proactive approach applied by both sides. Fourth one is the principle of reciprocity and goodwill guiding the dialogue process. Fifth one is regular political contacts at all levels including the highest level that is needed to discuss issues critically and keep the engagement process moving. Sixth one is evolving a convergent vision for peace and cooperation in the entire South Asia region. In this regard, an important point is the articulation of a common regional perception of shared risk regarding a possible nuclear war that is capable of generating collective awareness and cultivating collective

[24] Statement by Ambassador Akram, Munir; Pakistan in the Conference on Disarmament, August 19, 1999, available at http://www3.itu.int/pakistan/CD-Indian%20Nuclear%20Doctrine-19%20August%2099.htm

[25] See, Maleeha Lodhi, "Nuclear Cloud over South Asia", *The Times of India*, New Delhi, My 1, 2006.

efforts aimed at avoiding a possible nuclear catastrophe.[26] There is also a compelling need to recalibrate other national strategic priorities – national defense, Kashmir, etc. It would be a complicated task. Pakistan is obsessed with India in its security thinking due to the prevailing asymmetry of power, particularly in the nuclear field, between the two countries, while India focuses on a wide range of security imperatives of which Pakistan is just one.

[26] See, Shaun Gregory, "A Formidable Challenge: Nuclear Command and Control in South Asia", *Disarmament Diplomacy*, The Acronym Institute, Issue No.54, February 2001.