

*Shireen M. Mazari*

## **NATIONAL SECURITY OF PAKISTAN**

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### **Abstract**

The paper examines the dynamics of Pakistan's national security, focusing on its concerns and objectives. Security concerns have been viewed from both internal and external perspectives. Of the internal dimension of national security concerns, the paper identifies four levels at which the internal dynamics of state-society relations impact directly on Pakistan's security framework – with the first level itself altering the dynamics of the other three. While militarisation of civil society is identified at the first level, the other three includes the lack of democratic political culture and stable political structure, growth of ethnic and sectarian groups, and socio-economic underdevelopment and its impact on Pakistan's external policy options. At the same time, the paper looks into the causal factors leading to these problems. The external dimension focuses on traditional conflict with India on the Kashmir issue and nuclear deterrence as well, but attempts to view them in a broader context, i.e. how US' new containment policy affects South Asia in favour of India, and, thereof, affects Pakistan's security. As for the national security objectives at the internal level, the paper stresses on building sound democratic state structures and a dynamic economy for the cause of internal cohesion. At the external level, as far as nuclear factor is concerned, while Pakistan needs to move towards détente with India, at

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the same time it needs to look at co-operative security relationships with Central and West Asia since countries of these regions fall within India's increasing missile reach. Pakistan also needs to forge military cooperation with China to reduce threats coming from the fallout of the US Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) on South Asia. The paper concludes with a set of prescriptions that could be undertaken for nuclear risk reduction in the region.

## 1. Introduction

This paper examines the dynamics of Pakistan's national security, focusing on concerns and objectives. Security is indivisible and is something a state can have more or less of. Security has an objective and subjective dimension as well as an internal and an external dimension. At a minimal level, a state includes within its security parameters territorial integrity, national sovereignty and the absence of fear of threat to these values – which as a basic feature is common to all states. Of course, with the growing interdependence amongst states within the international system, *sovereignty* itself has, over the decades, altered in its conceptualisation.

While there is a tendency to focus on the external dimension when dealing with issues of national security, the indivisibility of this notion implies that the internal dimension of security is equally critical. Just as foreign policy emanates - or should emanate - from domestic compulsions, so external security is interlinked to the internal dynamics of a state's security.

In fact, the internal dimensions of security have become critical within the context of nuclearization and the changing nature of warfare. Increasingly, with the advent of ever more lethal weapons, the cost-ineffectiveness of the military solution through occupation has meant that traditional warfare has given way to other unconventional means. In the same way, with the battlegrounds extending beyond the military



front to the civilian population-industrial areas and civilian spheres of activity, the socio-ecological costs of traditional war have increased manifold - especially with the advent of nuclear facilities and industries like the chemical industry, which can have tremendous fallout if destroyed. Since many industrial centres are close to population concentrations, the destructive fallout is further multiplied.

Also, while the international community has failed to outlaw war *per se*, it has become more and more unacceptable for states to use all-out military means to resolve their conflicts. Instead, the use of the military option is increasingly justified within some multilateral cover. In the present day world, war has now expanded to include many unconventional means like guerrilla warfare, psychological warfare including the use of terror, economic warfare and indirect intervention in the territory of a rival state. In many ways, while for Clausewitz war was a continuation of politics by other means, now it is almost as if politics has become an extension of war by other means. And in these "other means" is included all manner of tactics short of direct all-out military confrontation. One major tool of "other means" is subversion, which is also linked to terrorism across borders - for instance, the Maoists in Nepal with links into the north-eastern states of India, the Tamils with links to Tamil Nadu in India and so on.

Given the decreasing relevance and acceptability of conventional warfare, states in conflictual relationships opt for indirect interventions in enemy territory in order to destabilise and weaken the polity. As such then, low intensity conflicts become a more viable option - low intensity conflict referring to a level of violent engagement short of all-out war. Given the transnational linkages that sub-national groups within a state have these days, and given the reach of modern communications, the boundaries between external and internal, domestic and foreign have become increasingly blurred - highlighting once again the criticality of civil society in the security equation.

This is especially true for South Asia in general and Pakistan in particular. For instance, Muslim sectarian groups have linkages with external groups and governments while the various Christian churches also not only have their links with their parent churches, many of their educational and welfare institutions are funded from overseas. And ethnic linkages tie many groups with each other across Pakistan and India, and Pakistan and Afghanistan - to cite just a few major examples.

## 2. Internal dimension of national security concerns

One can identify four levels at which the internal dynamics of state-society relations impact directly on Pakistan's security framework – with the first level itself altering the dynamics of the other three.

**2.1. Militarization of civil society:** Whether it is a conflict between hostile student organizations or political rivalry, or an argument between two individuals, Pakistan's civil society has seen an increasing resort to violence to resolve all manner of conflicts. This militarization of civil society – its preference for a violent course of action over other means of exercising influence – became marked after the imposition of martial law following a military coup in July 1977. Militarization is directly linked to the concept of militarism – which denotes a “social formation and structure”<sup>1</sup> – reflecting it at the behavioural level of state and civil society. Both militarization and militarism reflect the prevalence of a conflictual framework at the level of the state and civil society, where increasing violence comes to mark conflict behaviour – not only of the state but also of civil society within the state.

The 1977 coup and Zia's Afghan policy altered the dynamics of societal conflicts and enmeshed domestic and external policies more intensely together. With political parties banned and all venues for

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1 Thee, M. 'Militarism and Militarization in Contemporary International Relations', pp. 15-35 in A. Eide & M. Thee, eds, *Problems of Contemporary Militarism*. London: Croom Helm, 1980.



protest through legal means closed, polarisation within society intensified. Cleavages and conflicts within civil society, which had shown a violent trend under Z A Bhutto's increasing use of the coercive elements of the state, grew worse under the successor military rule. The ban on political parties led to an increasing focus on seeking identity through group membership based upon ethnicity, sectarianism and the traditional *biradari* (kinship) system. As it did then, such a development further bolsters the prevalent conflict within society, as polarization develops vertically.<sup>2</sup>

The Afghan crisis also altered qualitatively and quantitatively the militarization of civil society, primarily as a result of two factors:

- There was a massive influx of arms, especially submachine guns and automatic rifles, as weapons meant for Afghan guerrillas proliferated on the illegal arms market.<sup>3</sup> There was a rapid growth of the heroin trade with mafia-type syndicates often involving Afghan refugees who controlled the bulk of intercity cargo services.<sup>4</sup>

The militarization of society continued to prevail in the post-Zia period and still continues to act as an accentuator of civil society cleavages, leading to a general decline of law and order. This, in turn, weakens the domestic polity's fabric and thereby undermines the external projection of national interest. It also allows for easier internal penetration by external powers for subversive purposes. Until dewatering of civil society is effected extensively, democratization of the polity will not lower the level of militarization of society. This has been illustrated in the post-Zia period – from 1988 to

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2 Hussain, A., 'The Crisis of State Power in Pakistan', pp. 199-236, in P. Wignaraja & A. Hussain, eds, *The Challenge in South Asia*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

3 *Ibid.*, p.231 – also Noman, O. *Pakistan: Political and Economic History Since 1947*. London: Kegan Paul International Ltd. 1988.

4 Hussain, *Ibid.*

the present. This is why the present government has been trying to push through its programme of dewatering. It is too early to assess the success or failure of this programme.

**2.2. Political structures and stability:** The second level of internal state dynamics is the prevalence or otherwise of a democratic political culture and stable political structures. Pakistan has yet to evolve a substantive democratic culture, since its political history has been defined primarily by military rule in various forms. For instance, between 1977-2000, Pakistan has experienced three structural types of militarism while the patterns of the fourth are still in the evolutionary stage. First, from 1977 to 1985, the military was the ruling force, with a few civilians co-opted in; second, from 1985-1988, it was the decisive authority in co-partnership with civilians (with a brief reversion to being the main ruling force again after May 1988); third, from 1988-1999 the military maintained a decisive authority but under overall civilian supremacy.<sup>5</sup> Since October 1999, it has gone back to being the main ruling force with a few civilians co-opted in. Its structural dynamics are still unfolding. Also, Pakistan's civil democratic leaders have not only relied on the military to sustain them in power, but have used extra-constitutional means to deal with opponents.

Not only has this militarism defined external policy priorities, Pakistan's relations with other states have often been defined by the external perceptions of military rule. In addition, during the "democratic breaks", critical external policies often continued to be defined and operationalised by the military bureaucracy, with the civilian institutions barely keeping abreast of these dynamics.

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<sup>5</sup> Mazari, S. "The Militarization of Pakistan's Civil Society", in K. Rupesinghe & K. Mumtaz, eds, *Internal Conflict in South Asia*. London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1996.



However, political stability throughout has been undermined not only by the erratic democratic experiments but also by the societal violence and polarization that has come to mark the post-1977 political culture. The violence that came with the availability of weaponry and the abundance of drug money defined – and to a large extent still continues to define – this political culture. Political polarization became marked during the democratic periods as the intolerant culture of kinship, sectarianism and ethnicity undermined broad-based national political agendas.

**2.3. Growth of ethnic and sectarian groups:** The development of vertical polarization within civil society – a legacy of the Zia period – has continued to define Pakistan's political landscape. Ethnic parties, often organized along fascist lines (like the MQM), have fed on the economic discontent of ethnic groups within the country and helped to make the political milieu ever more volatile. They have become lucrative targets for external powers, which have supplied arms and training to some of these groups so that political conflicts alter into small-scale insurgencies. This is what happened in the 80s in Sindh with the MQM turning the cities of Sindh into urban insurgency battlegrounds. Exploiting the prevailing dissensions within civil society, such subversion involves the polarization of dissenting elements till such time that peaceful venues of redress to their grievances are *perceived* as closed by the parties concerned. For this, the minds of the dissenting groups have to be subverted through psychological warfare so that these people organize themselves into an increasingly militant body. At this point they can be armed and trained, so that eventually they challenge the state in a violent manner and create a situation of urban insurgency in major urban centres of the country - where power and wealth are centred.

Subversion becomes more relevant where the dissenting group/groups form a minority - albeit an influential and/or sizeable one - so that the possibility of a regular separatist national struggle under a full-scale guerrilla warfare strategy is not feasible for such a group. In other words, the aim of subversion is to keep giving the enemy a nosebleed so that he remains weak and on the defensive. Weakening the state from within and keeping it weak is the ultimate goal of subversion so that the state apparatus is unable to function effectively; and eventually the government is forced into erring on the side of overkill - which will further subvert the state's functioning.

From this perspective, then, ethnic conflicts are ideal preying grounds - where an ethnic group can be isolated and, therefore, polarized more easily. The separation of such a group can be based on playing on the racist theme. Two types of racism can be exploited:

**One**, "genuine racism" where a strong sense of racial-cum-ethnic identity exists and it is felt within the community that that is not accorded a sufficient degree of cultural and political recognition - as was the case with the Sindhis and Balochis in the sixties and early seventies and with the Bengalis in a pre-1971 Pakistan.

**Two**, "artificial racism" which can be either a defensive reaction to genuine racism or it can involve an attempt to stimulate a dormant emotion. The case of the MQM and the gradual perception built up amongst the Urdu-speaking populace of Sindh that they were being relatively deprived, would fit more into this category.

In many cases, it can be a combination of the two - where a strong ethnic identity exists and a relative sense of deprivation can stimulate a feeling of neglect and political alienation. Once the MQM highlighted the "Muhajir's" discontent, it was the quota system becoming divided into "urban" and "rural" in Sindh that bolstered the



sense of relative deprivation within the Urdu-speaking Sindhis. From the isolation of an ethnic group it is one step further to organizing that group into a militant force and gradually arming it so that a low-intensity conflict evolves within the territory of the enemy state - with acts of violent terror increasing in intensity as the government reacts violently and repressively with the state apparatus.

Moreover, the creation of one militant ethnic party/movement also has the domino effect of creating and/or making equally militant other ethnic parties/groups so that a full-scale violent ethnic struggle is unleashed within part of the territory of the enemy state - the case of Sindh being the most clear-cut example, where two of the main ethnic groups suddenly became polarised into two violently clashing entities.

So ethnic groups are attractive targets for subversion because of this domino effect that is inevitably set into motion. That violence has a momentum of its own, which is difficult to break out of, is clearly illustrated in the way the situation with the MQM has unfolded in Karachi. Even when the MQM has been part of the ruling elite, its cadres have continued to behave as if they were in opposition and on the fringes of the political mainstream.

Sectarian conflict also has grown within Pakistan in the post-1977 period so that external powers have found it expedient to use Pakistan for their proxy wars. The revival of political activity, instead of undermining sectarianism, sustained it because political parties found powerful support groups amongst the sectarian elements. The sectarian issue within Pakistan's domestic polity has had negative fallout on Pakistan's relations with Iran, especially with the targeting of Iranians by sectarian killing squads. Given the strategic importance of Iran for Pakistan, this has undermined Pakistan's external security.

**2.4. Socio-economic development:** Corruption within the state apparatus, uneven development, neglect of the agricultural sector and an unhealthy dependency on the textile sector has undermined economic progress. An undocumented economy has allowed a parallel economy to develop, which has further eroded national resources. All these factors have led to an overwhelming dependence on external financial resources. This external dependency affects Pakistan's external policy options, limiting many alternatives, which donors may not permit. Also, most external financial inputs have gone into non-revenue generating activities, thereby further burdening the nation.

Economic compulsions are also making it increasingly difficult for Pakistan to put the issue of trade with India on the back burner till political conflicts between the two are resolved. If the pressure continues, Pakistan's external security imperatives may well be further jeopardized. Along with the economic underdevelopment, social development is impeded by an uncontrolled population growth, which so far the state has been unable to control.

### **3. External dimension of national security concerns**

At one level, the internal dynamics of Pakistan have become a vital factor in defining its external security parameters and options, especially with the advent of subversion and Low Intensity Conflict (LIC), which have blurred the distinction between external and internal security formulations.

Mutual nuclear deterrence in South Asia has created an interesting and dichotomous security scenario between Pakistan and India. That is, on the one hand, the mutuality of the nuclear deterrence has made both sides realize the futility of engaging in an all-out traditional war with



each other for territorial gains. But, on the other hand, the same logic has allowed both sides a greater freedom to intervene covertly in existing conflicts to win the hearts and minds of the people - or at least to try and alienate the people from their respective states. Both sides also see a greater flexibility of fighting limited military engagements, which they know they must keep limited because of the overall nuclear deterrence they both possess. While this scenario was prevalent even when there was only a covert nuclear deterrence, the overt nuclear capabilities demonstrated by both these states have further accentuated this situation.

But there is also the traditional external security framework for Pakistan where the main threat perception is formulated in terms of India. Here the core issue is the unresolved issue of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, the bulk of which is under Indian occupation and presently over 700,000 Indian forces are present there trying to put an end to the freedom struggle that has continued since 1989. Time and again, efforts and agreements to normalize relations between the two countries have gone awry because of the Kashmir dispute. The latest Musharraf-Vajpayee Summit at Agra also finally faltered over this issue. However, a noticeable shift has occurred at Agra which may help move the states out of their previous zero-sum of deadlocked positions: this is the tacit (at least) realization by India that without political moves to seek resolution of the Kashmir conflict, there can be no normalization of relations between Pakistan and India. Without this normalization there will continue to be strategic disunity in South Asia and, therefore, no lasting peace and security. Also, unless there is some progress towards the political resolution of this conflict, the military struggle on the ground will continue.

Apart from the domestic compulsions on both sides to resolve the conflict<sup>6</sup>, there are external compulsions within the context of a nuclear South Asia.

The security concerns for Pakistan have been further aggravated because of the new strategic formulations being put in place by the US, especially those aspects that directly or indirectly impact upon South Asia.

**3.1. The New Containment:** US strategic policy on the ground now clearly reflects what can be termed as a new policy of containment - where it creates security linkages under multiple alliance-forms, cooperative structures and treaties. So how is this new containment being operationalised?

Beginning with **Europe**, the military alliance NATO has expanded to include Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary. Also, the Europeans and the US have shown their preparedness to intervene forcefully to deal with challenges to the *status quo* that prevail presently in Eastern and Southern Europe. Greater autonomy they may allow to nationalist struggles like that of the Kosovars, but no more new states.

Moving on to the **Middle East**, the US has tried to delink "secular" Muslim states from the forces of populist Islam. This was one reason why Clinton had made a massive effort to woo the late President Assad of Syria (quite unsuccessfully). After all, with Turkey being promised entry into the EU, and with Egypt and Jordan

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6 Apart from the need to redirect national focus on poverty eradication in the two states, and the internal compulsions for Pakistan highlighted above, for India the Kashmir dispute is now taking its toll on the armed forces. There are reports of increasing morale erosion and indiscipline in the Indian forces stationed in Indian-held Kashmir. The inability of the Indian military to stamp out the mujahideen struggle has led military chiefs in India - past and present - to publicly call for a political resolution of the conflict.



already allied with the US, the only challenge to Israeli dominance in the region was coming from Syria – until the outbreak of the latest Intifada.

From the Middle East on to the **Gulf region** and **West Asia**, the US feels uncertain in this region given the presence of Iran, a Taliban Afghanistan and the region of the land-locked states of Central Asia beyond. Pakistan also is not the “reliable” ally that it once was. So all the US has at the moment in this region in the form of security allies are Oman and Saudi Arabia - along with a friendly UAE. Of course, with the Diego Garcia base having become redundant in strategic military terms, Oman is a critical alternative for the US.

From Oman Washington looks to **South Asia** where India is the central ally for the US - not only in terms of its markets but also its increasing military potential. India is the anchor of US containment policy in the making, both in terms of land and sea power, and a powerful counter to the natural power spread of China. In many ways, India is the crossroads of the containment policy where the focus begins to shift from the Islamic world to China.

From India towards South East Asia and the Pacific region, the US has a string of allies that include Thailand, a cooperative Singapore, Philippines, Guam further out in the Pacific Ocean, Taiwan closer to mainland China, then South Korea and finally Japan. It is in this context that Vietnam is seen as the critical gap filler between Thailand, Philippines and Taiwan. With an appeased Russia atop, the containment circle is almost complete for the US in the post-bipolar world. And to keep Muslim Indonesia in check, as well as an independent and, therefore, possibly “unreliable” Malaysia on notice, there is a future ally in East Timor, along with Singapore of course. And all this is bolstered by the long-standing alliance

between the US and Australia and New Zealand - which will strengthen the Southern end of the containment circle.

Within this new Containment, sanctions are a major political tool just as Ballistic Missile Defence is to be the main military component. The US has, of course, used unilateral sanctions frequently as a foreign policy tool, but with the end of bipolarity, the US has sought international legitimacy cover for its sanctions policy, by routing these sanctions through the United Nations.

However, comprehensive and open-ended sanctions as applied against Iraq have become the subject of debate on two main counts. One, that not only have they failed to achieve the ends for which they were designed, but they have worked to sustain Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in power; and, two, that they have caused untold misery to the Iraqi people. Yet sanctions are a powerful, non-military weapon of war – at least in the manner in which they are being used presently – and so the US and its allies want to redefine them in ways that will sustain their efficacy. Hence the new notion of “smart” or “targeted” sanctions – which will transform sanctions into a major non-military weapon of war.

In fact, the original intent of sanctions as envisaged in the UN Charter (Chapter VII, Articles 41 & 42) has been lost sight of completely as the new US-defined sanctions regime is now developing within the UN. After all, they were originally seen as a means of punishing military aggression and were not to be open-ended and used against any state disliked by the international community. Nor were sanctions intended to contravene or undermine the UN's humanitarian functions.

Bolstering this new Containment, militarily, will be the development of Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) by the US. BMD



comprises two components – National Missile Defence (NMD) and Theatre Missile Defence (TMD). While the NMD is a fixed, land-based, non-nuclear missile defence system with a space-based detection system – the envisaged TMD focuses on rapid deployment and with an element of high manoeuvrability. And, unlike the NMD, the TMD comprises a number of subsystems. Both the NMD and the TMD pose a direct threat to China's small deterrent force as well as undermining Russia's deteriorating deterrent forces. The issue of "rogue" states does not really wash because only the US imagination could think of a missile attack on the US mainland from a state like North Korea.

In many ways, NMD can be seen as part of a strategy of unilateral hegemony, which will allow the US to intervene anywhere with impunity. The most threatening aspect of this programme is that it totally destroys the prevailing deterrence, at global and regional levels, which has so far been premised on mutual vulnerabilities wherever it has existed in a stable fashion. BMD also challenges the whole nuclear regime comprising of bilateral and multilateral arrangements, in addition to the ABM Treaty. Russia, which has reaffirmed its ABM Treaty commitment is unwilling to renegotiate this treaty. Nevertheless, the ABM Treaty has an "extraordinary" cancellation clause, which allows either side to give six months' notice of withdrawal for reasons vital to national security. It is in the context of trying to win over Russian support for BMD that Russia is being allowed a militarily free hand in its "region of interest" like Chechnya, regardless of gross human rights violations.

Of course, once operational the BMD may well make the NATO deterrent shield over allies like Canada, Japan and Europe may be weakened now since they can become more accessible targets than the US. This is one reason why the US is now trying to sell the BMD

not as a national programme but simply as a Missile Defence (MD) programme – the latter term being used more frequently by US officials and exponents of the notion.

Also, the US needs allies at the regional level for this programme. It is within this context that we can understand why the US has made no protest over India's acquisition of the aerial surveillance platforms from Russia and its efforts to acquire TMD systems from Israel. The assumption is that India, along with Israel, will be a critical defence ally. One reflection of this is the growing military cooperation between Israel and India –with Israel often being the indirect conduit of US technology transfers.

Also, because the US has close defence linkages with certain Arab states in the Gulf region, India is now also seeking to become more proactive diplomatically on this front. While it is assumed that India's overtures to countries in the Gulf region are primarily aimed at countering Pakistan's influence there, the US security linkages is at least an equally strong *raison d'être* for these overtures.

The post-bipolar Indo-US relationship has, contrary to popular perception, not been the result of a new thinking on the part of the two protagonists. Rather it reflects the fruition of concepts and images that both countries have held of each other and of themselves from the beginning. It was simply that the Cold War dynamics meant that these perceptions led the two down differing, often conflicting paths. With the disintegration of the Soviet empire, it was natural for the two to come together and move towards a strategic relationship – a relationship that suffered a jolt with the Indian nuclear tests of 1998, but which quickly picked up its momentum soon after, especially with the visit of President Clinton in March 2000. The bonding between Vajpayee and Clinton reflected the coming together



of the two states. The Vision document signed by Clinton and Vajpayee declared a "resolve to create a closer and qualitatively new relationship between the US and India" on the basis of "common interest in and complementary responsibility for ensuring regional and international security." This document declared that India and the US were partners in providing "strategic stability in Asia and beyond."<sup>7</sup>

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7 All in all, the Indo-US relationship that has been evolving since the end of bipolarity has intensified in the economic and security issue areas.

#### **Economic Cooperation**

India's Bangalore is now among the top five world-class IT centres with the cheapest pool of skilled manpower. On his visit to India, Clinton signed a dual-use technology transfer agreement in the IT sector worth \$5 billion. In 1999 Indo-US trade reached \$16 billion in goods and services, with most of it coming from India to the US. In fact, the US is India's largest trading partner now and US FDI in India has risen sharply since July 1991.

#### **Defence/Security Cooperation**

Now that India and the US have a common perception of India's role in the region – as described above – one can expect an ever-closer cooperation in the defence field and security issue area. But the US never really penalized India for its nuclear explosion even in 1974. In fact, a month after the 1974 Indian nuclear test, the US agreed to reschedule India's foreign debt and increase economic assistance to India, in cooperation with other allies, by about \$ 200 million. Also, despite the 1978 US Nuclear Non Proliferation Act, the Carter Administration found it convenient to agree to the supply of fuel for India's Tarapur plants in order to strengthen "ties with a key South Asian country."

In 1984, there was an Indo-US MOU on technology transfers and US-Indian defence cooperation expanded tremendously so that in terms of export licenses issued by the US in 1987, India ranked 7. Items transferred as a result of this MOU included LM-2500 gas turbine engine for upgrading Indian naval vessels, night vision devices for tanks as well as permission to co-produce the devices, co production of the Northrop Corporation TF-5 aircraft in India and a F5 tooling facility for 5% of the original cost. Also significant was the collaboration by the US in India's LCA project.

In the 1990s, Indo-US defence sales were supplemented by reciprocal exchange of information and personnel under what became known as the Kicklighter Proposals.

Defence cooperation is also facilitated by the establishment of separate groups to deal with different issues. The establishment of an army and navy Executive Steering Group in 1992, and the airforce in 1993 led to the first ever military exercises on regular basis. By 1997, the two had sponsored five joint exercises between the army, airforce and navy. In January 1995, the two countries signed the Agreed Minutes On Defence Relations Between the

#### 4. Implications for the region and Pakistan

On bilateral Indo-Pakistan issues, the Indo-US relationship has impacted in three ways:

4.1. *On Kashmir:* There is pressure on India to resolve this conflict – but the US is not interested in an equitable or just resolution. Nevertheless, US pressure, in the face of the continuing insurgency, did push Prime Minister Vajpayee into hosting the Agra Summit. The catch for India is that unless it can resolve the Kashmir issue or at least push it off center-stage, it cannot move towards realisation of its ambition of being acknowledged as a great power. But even pushing Kashmir off centre-stage requires some moves to try and resolve the dispute.

4.2. *On the issue of terrorism:* India has successfully linked the Kashmiri struggle to Pakistan encouraging “cross-border terrorism”. But, untenable as this assumption is, even this requires discussion on the Kashmir dispute and some moves to seek its resolution with Pakistan. The US, post-Indo-Pak Agra Summit, has also realized the need to resolve the Kashmir dispute keeping in mind the wishes of the Kashmiri people. As US Assistant Secretary of State Christina

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United States and India covering service-to-service and civilian-to-civilian cooperation, as well as co-operation in defence production and research. In this regard three separate groups were established to foster more interaction and facilitate discussion:

- Defence Policy Group (DPG), for tackling issues of defence cooperation. The group also tackles sensitive issues like CTBT and Kashmir.
- Joint Technical Group (JTG), for discussing issues related to defence research.
- Joint Steering Committee (JSC), for discussing personnel and information exchange, as well as joint exercises.

Nor were India's nuclear tests of 1998 a major impediment in the security cooperation between India and the US. In fact, following the tests, an Indo-US dialogue was instituted on nuclear and related security issues. The 10th Round of this Dialogue was held in London in January 2000. In fact, there is a view that had Pakistan not tested, India's nuclear weapon status may well have been accepted *de jure* by the US and its allies.



Rocca declared after the Indo-Pak Summit: "Our position now is that the issue of Kashmir should be resolved between India and Pakistan taking into account the wishes of the Kashmiri people."<sup>8</sup>

4.3. *On the nuclear issue.* The US has at least covertly conceded that there is a need to separate proliferation issues from nuclear safety issues. Also, with the US now itself undermining the CTBT, both Pakistan and India have seen the pressure on this issue reduced – at least from the US.

Another issue that is likely to impact on the security of the region and of Pakistan, is the issue of energy security – because India is trying to find new rationalizations for intervening either directly or indirectly within its neighbourhood. India is now emphasising its need for "energy security" - in other words its need to secure assured sources of energy supply. Whether it is gas from Bangladesh or gas and oil from Central Asia and Iran, one can see how at a future date India may choose to use the instability in these regions to intervene directly and establish "pro-India" governments in power. So, one should expect greater Indian activism in Central Asia and Afghanistan. In fact, in the latter instance, India is already coordinating its interventionist policy with Russia and the US.

## 5. Afghanistan

The situation in Afghanistan, with the international isolation of the Taliban regime and Pakistan's support for it, has aggravated Pakistan's external security threat – as well as having direct fallout on its domestic polity. For Pakistan, the Taliban regime has become a burden that it cannot shed. After all, Pakistan has recognized all regimes in Kabul, because of the ethnic linkages between Afghanistan and Pakistan's

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8 As quoted in *The News* (Pakistan) editorial "US and Kashmir", 23.7.2001

Frontier province as well as the need for Pakistan to avoid a two-front threat scenario. The land-locked status of Afghanistan has also been a factor in intensifying Pakistan-Afghanistan interaction, but, unlike India in the case of Nepal, Pakistan has not chosen to hold Afghanistan hostage over transit trade. Only with the Taliban government, Pakistan has sought to reduce the items on the transit trade list. While Pakistan cannot dictate to the Taliban regime, it may need to act more firmly to assert Pakistan's national security priorities. But, in the final analysis, only a quick end to the prevailing military struggle in Afghanistan and the prospect of a multi-ethnic government may restore stability in this region and allow Pakistan to exploit the full economic potential of Central Asia.

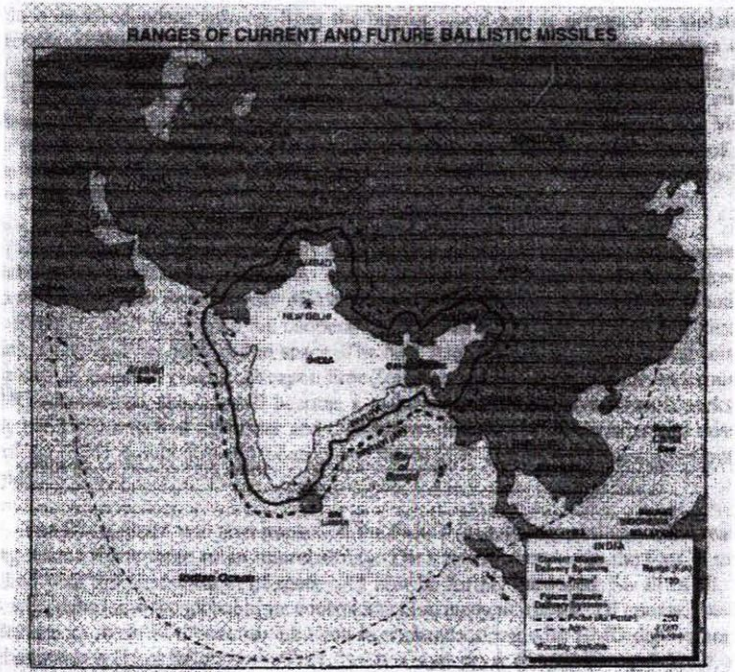
## **6. National Security Objectives**

At a minimum level, Pakistan seeks to have a more cohesive civil society, within its heterogeneous composition. Hence a major objective is to undermine the sectarian and ethnic conflicts and dewater society so that there is a decreasing militarization of the polity. Building sound democratic state structures and a dynamic economy are necessary for increasing internal cohesion and security of the nation from within.

At the external level, Pakistan needs to move towards stabilization of the nuclear factor as well as evolving regional cooperative frameworks. While there is an urgent need to move towards détente with India, for long-term security Pakistan needs to further regional cooperative frameworks. In this context, Pakistan needs to look at West and Central Asia, especially since the nuclearization of South Asia has removed the traditional regional divides between South and West Asia on the one hand, and South and East Asia on the other. The increasing range of Indian missiles has ensured this erosion (see Figure 1).



Therefore, Pakistan needs to examine the possibility of building “communities of power”, where the military factor, while still an important part of the equation, will be simply one of the factors defining cooperative relations. Within such a framework what one will see are not “poles” of power or “centres” of power, but what I refer to as **communities of power** - where “community” denotes multi-polarity of interests and “power” denotes the element of military and/or economic force. For Pakistan, it is this framework that must be developed, regionally and globally. This notion describes interstate relations at multiple levels encompassing economic, social and cultural linkages and interdependence, where the military factor is *one* of the inputs. It is within this framework that Pakistan has to build up regional alliances – be they with the Gulf states and/or Iran.



Map precedes the latest Agni test where the range exceeds 2500 km.

For Iran, which is now moving towards a proactive security policy in the Gulf region, Pakistan's cooperative military linkages with the Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia offers an in-built structural framework on which to build a cooperative strategic relationship. Here, the Iran-Saudi rapprochement and moves towards the normalisation of Iran-Iraq relations will help bring stability to the Gulf region. A linkage with Pakistan would extend this stability into west Asia as a whole. As for the India-Iran interaction, in the long term given Indian and Iranian ambitions in the Indian Ocean region and Central Asia, their relationship with each other will be a competitive one.

Also, a community of power alliance will, over a period of time, reduce the Gulf region's technological and military dependence on the West – given Pakistan's military potential and capabilities. In other words, the states there will simply be looking to the West as a buyer with other choices - and will not need to have a security dependency on the West, which it has at present.

Also, Pakistan's external security dynamics have been further aggravated by the BMD programme, which – at the regional level, given India's role in it – will, at the very least may, compel China to seek an expansion of its ICBM force including more multiple warheads. China may also choose to develop ICBMs that can escape sensor detection and it may now opt for mobile warheads based in submarines – with a more expansive deployment, perhaps even in the Indian Ocean.

How will the BMD impact the global arms control agenda in general, and Pakistan's strategic deterrence in particular?

To begin with, the ABM Treaty will stand totally violated. It seems that Bush regards it as a redundant leftover from the bipolar



world and is prepared to violate it unilaterally, if Russia does not agree to its complete revision. But it now appears that Putin and Bush may well have reached some understanding over this whole issue. In any case, the ABM Treaty has an "extraordinary" cancellation clause, which allows either side to give six months' notice of withdrawal for reasons vital to national security. More dangerous is the new US line of treating international agreements as "leftovers" of the bipolar era. After all, almost all the arms control measures can be placed in this "leftover" category, including the NPT with its legitimating of only five nuclear weapon states.

The BMD will also violate many existing international arms control arrangements beyond the bilateral ABM Treaty. At the multilateral level, the BMD plan directly contravenes the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, especially with the US plan to use Tactical High Energy Laser developed in cooperation with Israel as one of the anti-missile systems, which will be deployed in space. The NPT itself will be undermined, especially its Article VI. Even the Nuclear Weapon Free Zone treaties (NWFZs) will be undermined by TMD. Worse still, the US will become a major missile proliferator when it seeks to deploy the TMD on allied territories and therefore transfers sensitive missiles and missile technology. This would directly contravene the MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime).

The BMD factor will also impact on the FMCT (Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty), making such a treaty more of an improbability. The Chinese stance that the FMCT must be linked with denuclearisation of space will now be further hardened. So all in all, the BMD will undermine the global arms control and disarmament agenda. Of course, the US will declare its intent of unilateral reduction in warheads along with BMD deployment – but other states will not follow suit unless they too have acquired a BMD capability.

As for Pakistan, the BMD with its TMD component will be a source of strategic threat in the future. Already India has acquired components of TMD from the Soviet Union and now it is in the process of acquiring the Phalcon radar. This means that Pakistan's limited missile force and deployments are directly threatened and thus its deterrence weakened. Pakistan will have to place its missiles on mobile launchers as far back as Balochistan – until hardened silos can be perfected – which puts stress on command, control and communications. Also, political stability of the province becomes a vital factor in terms of safety of the dispersed and deployed weapons.

In fact, Pakistan may be compelled into going for some triad arrangement of nuclear forces –as well as seeking defence agreements within West Asia/Gulf region to make up for its lack of spatial depth. The extensive reach of India's missiles as well as its intent of deploying missile defence means that the distinction between South and West Asia/Gulf has been eliminated in the military context.

Along with this, with China being compelled to increase its warheads and ICBMs, India is bound to use that as a pretext to amass further missiles and so there is a danger of a missile race in this region. But there is also the opportunity for Pakistan's closer military cooperation with China. After all, in the face of it being targeted twice – through NMD and TMD – China, as stated above, will need to expand its naval military presence to the Indian Ocean. In this regard, Pakistan can offer base facilities along its coastline. There is thus a need now for a formal defence cooperation agreement between China and Pakistan with a strong focus on the belt from the Gulf to Myanmar. In such a scheme, Bangladesh may also come in to protect itself from India's growing militaristic policies.



Such cooperation also has an economic side in that it will help secure energy supplies. It is clear that BMD will lead to a more direct linkage between security and economic issues. India has already been talking of energy security and making strategic inroads in the Gulf region. Pakistan and China cannot afford the luxury of ignoring these developments now that the US has gone overt with its intent of developing and deploying BMD. Also, given the new technological cooperative links in the military field – based on BMD needs – between the US, Israel, Japan, South Korea, India, Taiwan, etc, there is a need for Pakistan to expand its military-technological cooperation not only with China but also with the states of West Asia and the Middle East. How South Africa reacts to the BMD will also define the future of Africa in terms of regional non-proliferation and military capabilities and alliances.

Finally, a country like Pakistan will find its political options constrained in the wake of the BMD plan and the evolving Indo-US-Israel nexus in this regard. In other words, the US-centric option is simply not there anymore and alternative options need to be taken advantage of. But Pakistan also needs to put its fears regarding the BMD on the top of its dialogue agenda with the US, since this is a major source of threat for this country. Also, Pakistan now has to view all its arms control commitments within the context of the threat BMD poses to it – including adopting a closer link with China on FMCT negotiations. As for regional options of nonproliferation – they cannot now be dealt with in isolation from the global situation, given the direct linkage established between the two by the components of BMD.

## **7. Nuclear Risk Reduction**

Despite the fallout of the BMD, there is a need for Pakistan and India to develop some sort of a regime, or mechanisms, to reduce the

risk of nuclear war – intended or unintended – in South Asia. There are two levels at which conditionalities have to be created if nuclear risk reduction is to become a feasible proposition. There is the political level and there is the technical level. Within these parameters one can put forward nine conditions that would be critical for nuclear risk reduction in South Asia.

*One:* Moves towards resolution of the most sensitive issue – Kashmir.

*Two:* Until the Kashmir conflict is resolved through dialogue - taking into consideration the realities on the ground in IHK - the maintenance of an effective cease-fire agreement along the LoC becomes an essential condition. For this purpose, the LoC as prevailed at the end of the 1971 war and as agreed to at Simla, needs to be reaffirmed in *toto* - which requires Indian evacuation of Siachin and all other territorial grabs made beyond the LoC since 1972. For until that is done there is no viable LoC, which can be asserted. Without an enduring cease-fire there will always be the risk of escalation of conflict.

*Three:* Following from the above, in order to ensure the strict maintenance of a cease-fire and to prevent infiltration so as to establish trust on both sides, there must be an agreement to place international observers (UN or SAARC) on both sides of the LoC.

*Four:* A nuclear dialogue with India aiming to establish nuclear stability. This would require agreement on limitations in relation to missile deployments and warheads. In the case of India, Pakistan would be focusing on Pakistan-specific missiles, and seeking proportional equity in numbers within the Indian triad spectrum.

*Five:* Avoidance of military brinkmanship and dangerous military practices - a condition also identified by Krepon of the Stimson Centre. This would include restraint from military attacks



across the LoC and threatening military manoeuvres close to the border and LoC. In this context, while nuclear capability has made limited war a feasible notion for both Pakistan and India, to propagate such a war also reflects a dangerous adventurism that must be resisted.

*Six:* Strengthen existing lines of communication between the two sides and enforce military CBMs already in place.

*Seven:* Develop nuclear transparency and national technical means of verification. With regard to the latter, the US could provide technical know-how, which would allow both sides to develop their own national technical means which become crucial for nuclear risk reduction in an environment where trust will be minimal in the immediate future.

*Eight:* Secure nuclear systems against accidental war. Here again, the US could provide the technical assistance especially since it is so concerned about this issue in this region.

*Nine:* Institute a permanent nuclear strategic dialogue structure, which would strengthen trust between the two sides as well as deal with critical issues rapidly.

Given the growing interdependence globally in interstate relations, any interaction between states and civil societies, especially within the nuclear framework, directly links the national security of a state not only to that of its immediate neighbours, but also to the regional neighbourhood. Therefore, states like Pakistan and India, even as they continue to define their relationship in adversarial terms, also need to move from a zero-sum framework to a positive-sum framework. For this, it becomes critical to evolve viable regional frameworks for security – hence the need to widen and redefine the SAARC framework as a beginning towards looking at the interdependent nature of security in the nuclear context.