

# REGIONALIZATION OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN SOUTH ASIA IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN

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## Abstract

Regionalization is turning into the most famous pattern in the contemporary global relations. Regional associations are developing at a steady pace in the international political system. Traditionally, the accentuation of the territorial associations remained the monetary advancement, solidarity of part states for provincial security and determination of political question. However, in 1995 mediation by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) powers for securing peace in Bosnia started another period of peacekeeping operations by regional organisation. Regionalisation of peace keeping operations in the context of South Asia is novel idea but keeping in view the perennial paradoxes in Indian behaviour it seems allusion.

**Key Words:** Peace keeping, South Asia, India,

## Introduction

The prospects of powerful political influences, collective economic growth and collective security environment is considered the hallmark of the regionalization. Regionalization is becoming the most popular trend in the contemporary international relations. The concept of regionalization in the shape of European Union (EU) is attracting the attention of other regions for adopting such measures that can be productive for the development in all spheres. The trend of the regionalization has taken a momentum and regional organizations are emerging at a constant pace. Association of South Asian Nations (ASEAN), African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) are the contemporary regional organizations materializing the concept of regionalism. Conventionally, the emphasis of the regional organizations remained the economic development, unity of member states for regional security and resolution of political disputes. However, in 1995 intervention by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces for securing

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peace in Bosnia commenced a new era of peacekeeping by the regional organization.

Africa became the first region to embrace the concept of regionalization in peace keeping missions to alleviate the worsening effects of the ongoing conflicts in the region.<sup>1</sup> African countries in spite of developing a peace keeping mechanism are facing the problems in the development of conceptual, structural, operational frame works for independent peace keeping missions. The basic question regarding core assumptions of peacekeeping missions and its legitimacy is still unanswered and this will take years to refine the concept and to make it fully operative practically on the ground particularly by the African countries.

In Africa on primary questions that who will pay the cost of peace keeping missions, timing of withdrawal and how to address a security vacuum left by exiting peacekeepers as it may again relapse into conflict are still unanswered. On the concept of regionalization of peacekeeping missions/ operations political scientists have developed thought provoking concepts which are operative. This is due to the fact that the permanent pursuit of peace keeping missions has an underpinning thrust on peace, security and development which results at a later stage in growth of bilateral or multilateral trade, economic and cultural regimentation and integration of a region. Most of the scholars in the field underline that areas and regionalization are presently vital to worldwide governmental issues.

Peter Katzenstein rejects the idea of globalization, and is of the view that world is marching towards world of regions<sup>2</sup> as against the perennial concepts of bipolarity and multi-polarity. Similarly, Amitav Acharya puts light on how the world politics is defining and pushing the concepts of regionalism. Barry Buzan<sup>3</sup> and Ole Weaver are of the view that contemporary international order is in favour of strong regions.<sup>4</sup> Rick Fawn who is distinguished political scientist, writes that regionalism concepts have been materialized on the globe and this regionalism has become instrumental in running all aspects of world affairs; from international trade to crisis management,<sup>5</sup> and now there is a new desire among the nation states to unify into regional countries. In last two years a new trend has emerged in international politics which is paradoxical with the concept of regionalism. Britain which was one of the founding member of European Union (EU) has been in the process of separation. This exit has raised the questions

about the future of regionalism. Another new trend emerged in the shape of victory of President Donald Trump in which wave of nationalism emerged in the home ground of a super power. These both trends may influence future of regionalism.

Regionalism as a discipline has been introduced in the 21st century. It has transformed itself in the forms of ideology, economic, political and social organization. The empirical research and intellectual debates on regionalism assert that we must have an unblemished perception of regionalism. Professor Hettne is of the view that the processes of globalization and regionalization are built in, within the global structure.<sup>6</sup> However, in his judgment the new regionalism is different from regional integrations which were product of cold war in 1950's and 1960's.<sup>7</sup> He further, suggests regionalism is a return to the territorial and political multi-polarism.<sup>8</sup>

### **Raison d'être of Peace Keeping Missions**

The magnitude of devastation of Second World War was colossal. The victorious nations realized that League of Nations was miserably failed to check the war and decided to make new international collective security organization to give measured response to check future wars. After long deliberations, the delegations from fifty nations gathered in San Francisco to draft a charter for a new international collective security organization with a determination "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war." After signing the Charter, UN was established on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1945. Since 1948, the UN has conducted 67 peacekeeping operations in its member countries. All these operations were conducted in war torn areas or in the countries where due to insurgencies, conflicts and violence, disturbance was order of the day. Peace keeping is enshrined in the UN Charter. Major philosophy of articles of UN charter revolves around a single point i.e. peace and to save humanity from scourge and miseries of war. The chapter VII of UN charter empowers Security Council to authorize military action if it deems necessary to safeguard international peace and security. If an aggressor attacks on a sovereignty of member state then the UN Security Council can authorise military action against the aggressor. Most of the time Security Council gave decisions which were in the interests of veto powers. Under Article 43 of chapter VII, member states are obligated "to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance, and facilities ... necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security."

The trend of decisions of UN Security Council reveals that if an issue is in the interest of big powers, then resolutions passed from the platform of Security Council have most of the time been implemented, and where the issue relates to a state which has less value for big powers, even after passing a resolution, its implantation becomes a question. There are instances where US has taken military action without approval of UN Security Council. Further, many times, big powers have used the platform of UN Security Council for promotion of their own interests. During cold war era, due to divergences between super powers, most of the time issues referred to UN Security Council were vetoed.

The *raison d'être* of peace keeping missions is the maintenance of peace and security by deployment of peace keeping forces in a particular country/region. Over the period of time, peacekeeping has emerged an effective strategy to bring peace in a conflict ridden country. Peacekeeping operations have assumed the multi-dimensional facets like protection of civilian people, disarming the fighting groups or non state actors, their reintegration in the society, facilitating the political process, organization of elections, restoration of rule of law and to protect and promote human rights etc. The peace keeping missions have different forms<sup>9</sup> which may include observer mission, traditional peace keeping, multi-dimensional peacekeeping e.g. strategies for capacity expansion and institutional transformation".<sup>10</sup>

### **Regionalism in the South Asian Context**

In late 1970s President of Bangladesh Zia-ur-Rahman conceived the idea that regional countries should make trade bloc to promote trust, understanding and friendship. For this purpose he wrote letters to the leaders of Pakistan, India, Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan and Sri Lanka and explained the *raison d'être* and necessity of creation of an organization for the countries of South Asia. After shuttle diplomacy it was agreed by the member states that draft of working paper will be developed by Bangladesh to generate discussion among the countries of South Asia. For the first time foreign secretaries of South Asia met in Dhaka in 1980 and discussed the draft. Foreign Secretaries of South Asia again met in Sri Lanka in 1981 and marked five areas of cooperation. Foreign Secretaries of South Asia met again in New Delhi in 1983 and confirmed the areas of cooperation which were proposed and discussed in Colombo. Finally South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) was established in Dhaka in December 1985

in the summit meeting of South Asian Head of States with its Secretariat in Kathmandu.

South Asia is a densely populated geographical region, essentially consisting of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. These countries have different political regimes, socio-economic realities and ethnic composition, religious and linguistic diversity the world could possibly offer. As a result, a regional integration scheme with several states, their clashing ideologies, values and interests, and national/domestic policies, because it difficult in its efforts to bring peace in the region. South Asia is unique in terms of factors that are both unifying and divisive. Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Sikhism and Christianity are shared by all the countries of the region. However, the overlapping of religious and linguistic groups across national boundaries becomes a trigger for conflicts. As a result, the geographical contiguity has outnumbered all possible reservations against the very idea of a South Asian form of regional cooperation and possible integration. The SAARC, representing more than one 6<sup>th</sup> of the mankind, has had an extremely unobtrusive start in advancing its institutional structures. South Asia has been a late-comer to the entire idea of regionalism. It turned into a veritable tortoise in contrast with other territorial groupings over the span of time because of the absence of energy and attitudinal changes with respect to India, and in this manner making one of the last district to wake up to the test of new regionalism.

In international arena, regionalism is the presence of both character and reason, combined with the development of establishments that express particular identity, shape and movement inside a geographical area. Regionalism is one of the three constituents of the global commercial frameworks alongside multilateralism and unilateralism.<sup>11</sup> WP Scott is of the view that regionalism is an approach to study the conduct that emphasizes the geographical region as unit of analysis; he further stresses the relationship between man and his immediate physical environment. Economic, social and cultural organizations are analyzed in terms of their inter-relationships and functions within the geographic region.<sup>12</sup> The scholars of international relations have difference of opinion on the definition of regionalism. A group of scholars view regionalism as result of topographical structures with social and cultural synchronization while others stress that religion, ethnicity and politics are the basis of regionalism. A known scholar Christellar stresses on social relationships and organizational principles.<sup>13</sup> Marshall E. Dimock considers regionalism as a clustering of environmental,

economic, social and governmental factors to such an extent that a distinct consciousness of separate identity within the whole region may emerge.<sup>14</sup>

The Sub Continent region has been one of the best supports of the antiquated human development. It is the origin of Buddhism and Hinduism, and in addition an incredible focal point of Islam. The locale has engraved permanent effects upon the way of life of Asian terrain. In spite of it, the area is regularly alluded high-hazard strife zone because of Indian attitudinal issues. The religious and semantic based larger part and minority characters are real factors that have significant effect upon the intra region relations in the Sub Continent. These hazardous patterns are highlighted in Indo-Pak relations and it is the basic trait of their shared relations. Indo-Pak contrast delineate a few measurements going from regional debate to division of land and sea limits, waters-courses, illicit movement to restricted or huge scale wars and fears of dominion towards the fringe states. Sir Creek, Baglihar Dam, Siachen Glacier, and Wullar Barrage are danger recognition between the two military. This verifiable introduction of contrasts joins on a solitary ground of Kashmir question. Be that as it may, this is the central issue and any expectation for peace and collaboration in South Asia lies in the determination of this contention. The partiality, suspicion, and doubt are predominant qualities of their relations.

In the South Asian context, regionalism may be analyzed from different contexts i.e. positive and negative. From the positive perspective, regional countries have desire for progress but in negative terms, all the member countries of South Asia have problems with India which is the largest country in terms of population, area and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) larger than combined rest South Asian countries. It is mostly believed that deprivation is purposefully inflicted by big power India on small regional countries.<sup>15</sup>

### **Regionalization of Peace Keeping Missions/Operations in South Asia**

In theory and practice, challenges of regionalization of peace keeping operations involve finding the suitable relationship between the Security Council and regional peacekeepers. In theory, it is possible to conduct peace operations by the South Asian countries after getting approval by the UN Security Council but in practice it is not possible particularly in the South Asian context keeping in view regional countries unsettled disputes. In South Asia different societies are growing steadily and they may have common destiny.<sup>16</sup> Pakistan has Kashmir

dispute with India, Sri Lanka has Tamil Nado Problem with India, Bangladesh has Farrakka barrage problem including division of water of rivers which flow between transnational boundary particularly from Indian side into Bangladesh and Nepal has many of the unresolved conflicts with India.<sup>17</sup>

A theorist Michael Pugh's is of the view that the intelligent finish of regionalization is to undermine the UN's ethical specialist as the overseer of general standards and, urgently, qualifications by inferring that individuals ought to get just the level of peacekeeping their own particular locale can provide.<sup>18</sup> Most US administrations were and are less interested in regional organizations. US focus is on assertive multilateralism, coalitions, and pivotal states.<sup>19</sup> In this contextual imperative, regionalization can quickly become a platform for promotion of hegemony agenda.<sup>20</sup> In this contemporary world regional organizations are uneven, lack effective regional structures for maintaining peace.<sup>21</sup> In prevailing international setting, there are five veto powers which enjoy UN legitimacy while in regionalization of peace keeping operations, UN backing will be absent. In this scenario regional decision-making structures are absent and it is not possible to develop decision making structures with consensus particularly in South Asia in the presence of India as a hegemonic power.

### **Implications for Pakistan**

India and Pakistan have been suffering from different conflicts since 1947. However, different steps have been taken in order to resolve these issues by using different peace process. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) can be pointed out as a good step towards it. Main goal behind the forum is to form a union of South Asian countries for regional stability, peace and regional integration. However, due to Indian hegemonic designs, the desired outcome of this organization has not been achieved. Instead of an organization of regional peace, it has become a tool in Indian hands to twist the arms of small regional countries. Few implications for Pakistan are as under:

- Pakistan since its inception has tried to solve its disputes with India at all levels including within global frameworks, mega-regionalism, regionalism and bilateralism but Indian psyche and continued dominant behaviour is the major persistent hurdle and this behaviour is deep rooted in the history. Pakistan's dispute with India has assumed global significance. In this atmosphere it will not be productive or useful for

Pakistan to develop a model for regionalization of Peace Keeping Missions/Operations in South Asia.

- If Pakistan peace keeping forces are used against a state or non-state actors in any country of South Asia even within a regional or UN framework, there are likely chances that any incident will be projected by India against Pakistani peace keeping missions. So Pakistan should wait until Indian behaviour becomes practical and pragmatic and it leaves its perennial paradoxical nature and solves the outstanding issue of Kashmir.
- Size, economy, military potential, level of development and foreign policy objectives of all South Asian countries are not similar. India has expansionist designs, further, it has conflicts with all the South Asian regional countries. With this Indian psyche, coupled with its expansionist designs, it seems imperative that efforts to develop a model for regionalization of peace keeping missions/operations in South Asia may not be feasible as it may have negative consequences for other members or weak states of South Asia.
- India cannot be trusted as an effective and positive factor in regionalization of peace keeping troops by using the platform of South Asia as the medium for regional cooperation. If we look at the chronological events which have happened in South Asia, India never ever has cooperated with regional states. It has always intervened into the internal affairs of its neighbours. Separation of East Pakistan from the West Pakistan is novel and unique example. In this context there is perception gap between India and its neighbours. Until and unless India took some concrete and visible steps, it is very difficult to work with the Indians in South Asian contexts.
- India for many years vainly attempted to prevail over the other South Asian nations to line-up against Pakistan. In a way, India has tried to isolate Pakistan even at the platform of SAARC. With this contextual imperative or background it is not possible that regionalization of peace keeping operations in South Asia will be effective or operative particularly in the presence of Indian continued obstructive tactics/geopolitical dynamics against Pakistan.
- The prevailing cultural and religious diversity in South Asia is an indication of both shortcoming and fragmentation. The policy debate is



overwhelmed by idealistic thinking about the benefits of regional peace keeping missions and more or less inexperienced assumptions about what we can achieve.

## Analysis and Conclusions

If past is to learn then from South Asian history for regionalization of peacekeeping operations following appraisal is being made. Major points for consideration and for the purpose of analysis are as under:

- Indian leaders never stopped the manifestation of their hegemonic patterns in their actions. This is clear from past history. It has problem with all its neighbours. It has imposed three wars on Pakistan apart from Siachen occupation in 1987. India has fought war with China in 1962. It has problem with Nepal which is the only Hindu state in the world. Further, it has serious divergences and conflicts with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bhutan. The bent of mind or idiosyncrasy of its policy makers is hegemonic and this behaviour is always translated into its policies.
- India is the master in creating propaganda warfare and routinely turns to interests, economic threats and sanctions. It never scruples from using threat of military choice to overawe monetarily and militarily weak neighbours. Indian behaviour and its actions are responsible for nuclear race in South Asia.
- It is a piece of history that after the partition in 1947, India instead of helping Pakistan in settling down, had over-burdened Pakistan with horde of issues to jeopardize its development in that crucial period. We now realize that India had been conspiring since August 1947 to recover East Pakistan and make it a vital territory of unified India. At the time of partition in 1947 there was common consensus among the Indian leadership that Pakistan will not survive as an independent state.
- Indian military invaded and occupied Hyderabad, Junagadh and Manavadar whose Muslim rulers wanted to join Pakistan. Likewise it occupied Kashmir in October 1947 whose ruler was Hindu yet majority population was Muslim. This was clear violation of 3 June 1947 partition plan in which Lord Mountbatten laid the principles for princely states either to join India or Pakistan. The cardinal points for princely states were for joining either state were geographical proximity, ethno

religious composition and due regard to peoples aspiration was to be given. From all these principles Kashmir was part of Pakistan. India by violating the principles of 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1947 plan invaded and occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

- Soon after, Goa, Daman and Diu were also overtaken. As a whole, five hundred sixty five princely states were adjusted in Indian Union while rulers of *Junagadh*, *Munawar* and *Hyderabad* desired to join Pakistan but India invaded on these and occupied them forcefully.
- In the wake of making Bangladesh in 1971, India gave preferential treatment to Rakhi Bahini over Bangladesh military. Later on, India made Kadir Bahini to make inconvenience for General Zia-ur-Rahman and Gen Irshad Hussain administrations. In this way, Shanti Bahini was made to bolster Chakmas in Chittagong Hills.
- India provoked inconvenience in Sikkim in 1973 and in 1975 Kingdom of Sikkim was also annexed.
- **Bhutan:** The relations between India and Bhutan have traditionally been good and both countries have special relationship. However, India remained influential over the foreign policy of Bhutan along with her defence and trade policy. India is continuously providing aid thus making Bhutan the largest beneficiary of India's foreign aid. Keeping in view the India expansionist outlook its next target will be Bhutan. It was put under so much weight that it consented to go about as its vassal to hold its freedom. Bhutan is desirous to renegotiate with India 8 August 1949 parts of the treaty to enhance Bhutan's sovereignty as India controls/guides it's foreign and defence policy but India is resistive and denying.
- **Nepal:** Landlocked Nepal was threatened to toe its line by stopping food, pharmaceuticals, oil and water supplies and instigating riots. Whenever, Nepal looks for batter relations towards People's Republic of China and Pakistan, India has serious reservations. Nepal is land locked country and fully dependent on India for its import and exports. Under the international law a land locked country has the right to use the nearby port of neighbouring country but many times India has stopped the exports and imports of Nepal.
- **Burma:** It enjoyed good relations with Bangladesh yet India deteriorated their relations by instigating inconvenience in Arakan

Province driving 250,000 Arakenese to relocate to Bangladesh. The two neighbours are currently adversaries.

- **Maldives** is also terrified through false flag operations.
- **Sri Lanka:** Sri Lanka has serious reservation about Indian policies. In the decades of 1970s and 1980s Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) trained, encouraged and funded Liberation of Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) against the Sri Lankan government. India supplied to the insurgents, weapons and money. At present India has a serious reservation on Chinese investments in Sri Lanka particularly the developments of ports. India trained the Tamils to equip armed rebellion and take down Tamil State out of Sinhalese Island. Of the many groups prepared, Liberation of Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) was the deadliest. After a long war of thirty years, Sri Lanka paid a heavy price to control the insurgency of LTTE.
- **Disputes with all Neighbours:** India has border conflicts and other disputes with all South Asian neighbours. Further, it is doing hydropolitics with Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh, which she has deliberately held under her thumb. India by violating the Indus Water Treaty has constructed dams and hydropower projects in Jammu and Kashmir and is utilizing the Pakistan's share of water. One of the most used tactics by India is to put blame of her wrong doings on neighbours and project herself as victim of their actions.
- India is aspiring to be big power in Indian Ocean. It's naval built up and its collaboration with US, Japan, Australian and European navies is direct threat to its neighbouring countries. Further, its military and air built up and its ever increasing defence budgets are multiplying the fears of its neighbouring states. Prima facie all its military might will be used against its neighbours. India is pleading her case that all this military might is to counter China but expert of international relations are aware of the fact India is unable to give measured response to China in near or far future.
- Indian efforts to become a veto power in UN Security Council are detrimental to the interests and a real threat to its neighbours as it has conflicts with all its neighbours. Further, Indian influence in Afghanistan and its proxy war with Pakistan through aiding terrorists is manifestation of its nefarious designs.

- Regionalism is expression of group identity coupled with loyalty to the region. It supports the concept of development of one's own region without taking into consideration the interest of other region. Now the question arises that are there any historical trends to make South Asia a region? The answer is "No". In this context, development of a frame work for regional peace keeping missions seems very difficult.
- It is true that the fractious Indian behaviour is a major roadblock to regionalization of peace keeping operations among the South Asian nations. It needs to be appraised that game-changers can be expected or possible from India to act as a responsible shareholder in South Asian security and stability in its present strategic arrogance trance. So any effort in this direction will be waste of time and resources. Further, India is aspirant to assume a role of big power. For this purpose, it has become part of Trinity i.e. US, Japan and India and strategic quadrilateral i.e. US, China, Japan and India. India is desirous to assume the role of swing state especially to offset China in global politics. For this purpose, US and Japan are the major supporters of India and are creating a balance of power in Asian geopolitical dynamics against China through India.
- Up till now most peace keeping missions have been authorised by the UN Security Council in the legal framework of UN Charter. The region like South Asia which has unresolved disputes among themselves, it is not possible that the countries of South Asia will agree to any type of mechanism for peace keeping particularly in South Asia. There is trust deficit and divergences among its members. All types of available platforms which include UN, bilateral negotiations, track-I, track-II and track III diplomacy have failed to solve the outstanding issues like Kashmir with India.
- In spite of all implications, there can be a regionalization of peace keeping operations in South Asia if the region is defined beyond geography and China be included for this particular purpose. Inclusion of China in peace keeping missions in South Asia will be a measured response to Indian designs as well as its attitudes and intent. Until and unless India accepts the merits of the multilateralism concept and applies it to regionalization of peace keeping operations in South Asia this idea will remain delusion.

## NOTES

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