WAR AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT: ACTORS FOR CHANGE AND FUTURE WARS

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War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin; it is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied

Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

The Nation State is concurrently encountering both traditional and non-traditional challenges to its national security. The economic growth and the rising demand for resources in the global politics have not only increased interdependency among the states, but also have led to increased competition between the global players. This competition is not limited in the political and economic realm, but also operative in the military sphere. That is why, almost all the sovereign states have been intelligently monitoring their strategic environment and solidifying their defensive-fences by investing in their respective armed forces. According to estimate, the world spent $3.5 million every day on weapons and soldiers, and that each year more than $42 billion worth of conventional arms were sold to developing nations.[1] The investment in the military buildup entails arms race among states. The Realist School of thought predicts that arms race construct strategic environment, in which war becomes inevitable. Arms race between the strategic competitors erodes confidence, reduces cooperation in the relationship, and makes it more likely that a crisis (or accident) could cause one side to strike first and start a war rather than wait for the other side to strike.

The neo-realist's theorists underline that the structure of the strategic environment controls and impacts all actors. Though the strategic environment constrains the state behavior, yet the strong actors (Great Powers) do influence the orientation of strategic environment. It is because the fates of all the states in the international system are affected much more by the acts and the interactions of major ones than of the minor ones.[2] The power-

balancing characteristic of the strategic environment place special importance on the handful of great powers with strong military capabilities, global interests and outlooks, and intense interactions with each other. These powers generally have the world's strongest military forces and the strongest economies to pay for military forces and for other power capabilities. These large economies in turn rest on some combination of large populations, plentiful natural resources, advanced technology, and educated labor forces.[3]

The novelty of the current 'strategic environment' is the way threats and security challenges are interlinked, e.g. energy security, climate change, information technology, capital flows, armed conflict, transnational and local terrorism, organized crime, proliferation, scarce resources, and refugee issues. All these challenges are interconnected in an unprecedented fashion. Thus, the present strategic environment is unprecedented in its complexity. The sovereign state is facing challenge from both the threat of the rational opponent—sovereign state or a military alliance of sovereign states. This made the strategic military threats and risks more predictable. Secondly, the non-state actors,[4] i.e. benign and malignant multinational organizations are posing multidimensional challenges to the state's sovereignty and national security. They contain immense penetrating capacity in the alien societies through the information-revolution and economic-interdependency. Hence, the political elite of modern nation state must be able to comprehend the challenges in the strategic environment represented by both conventional and transnational entities.

In the military context, the transnational terrorist organizations represent a new phenomenon and threat, which was not part of traditional military thinking. In spite of the fact, that terrorism is an old phenomenon, the counterterrorism strategy is inept in combating menace of terrorism effectively. In the United States 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, the Pentagon called the post-9/11 global conflict the 'Long War' against 'dispersed non-state networks'. This definition of the conflict reflects the scale of the threat, but not its complexity, and it does not address the means of coping with the threat.[5] This strategic complexity demands a much broader conception of war, strategy and strategic environment

than we hitherto employed, and thereby the strategic response ought to be consigned to more than military matters alone.

The objective of this study is to critically examine the concept and significance of war and strategic environment in the twenty-first century to understand the relationship between them; and also identify actors which could transform the current global strategic environment. While discussing the strategic environment and war, the attempt has been made to clarify the definitional problems of strategy; strategic environment; and war. Notably, the debate is limited within paradigm of realist school of thought in general and traditional notion of security in particular. This study is divided into five sections. The first section deals with the theoretical debate on the strategic environment. In this section attempt has been made to define and elucidate the theory of strategy in both classical and modern sense. The second section elaborates the role of sovereign state in the strategic environment.

Second section contains a brief discussion on the concept and kinds of war. It is followed by a discussion on the current important strategic actors. The final section contains discussion on the anticipated categories of war.

Strategic Environment: Conceptualization

The term strategy is now generally used to describe the use of available resources to gain any objective. Governments have strategies to tackle the problems of education, public health, pensions and sanitations. In simple terms, strategy seeks to cause specific effects in the environment—to advance favorable outcomes and preclude unfavorable ones.[6] In the discipline of Strategic Studies, however, the term strategy is used in its traditional or original sense only: that is, as meaning the art of the military commander.[7] The word 'strategy has its origins in the Greek word *strategos,* which is normally translated as 'general'.[8] The word strategy also refers to the office of general. Thus, the word strategy has a military heritage, and classic theory considered it purely wartime military activity — how generals employed their forces to win wars. This reflects that it has primary role in war or any military

operation. In this context, definitions of strategy are abounding. The leading military analysts highlighted linkage between strategy and war in their works. For instance, Sir Liddell Hart defined strategy as: "the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy." Similarly, Collin Gray argues that strategy is "the relationship between military power and political power."[9] Robert Osgood expressed similar view point: "military strategy must now be understood as nothing less than the overall plan for utilizing the capacity for armed coercion — in conjunction with the economic, diplomatic, and psychological instruments of power — to support foreign policy most effectively by overt, covert, and tacit means."[10] These scholars' perceptions confirm that strategy involves the actual use or the threat of the use of force in international relations. More precisely, the making of strategy involves the use of military means to achieve political ends in particular instances.

The preceding discussion reveals that military force is not only used in the inter-state conflicts alone, but it could be used to address the challenges caused by the intra-state conflicts. Hence the strategy deals with the various aspects of the force application, i.e. both in internal and external milieu of the state and against visible and invisible cum diffuse threats to fulfill the ends of the policy. This kind of setting is referred by the strategic analysts as the 'strategic environment'. The strategic environment is a complex system consisting of systems within systems. Notably, the system having human beings its integral component is always dynamic because individuals are socially and psychologically changeable in different circumstances. The strategic environment, encapsulated by the U.S. Army War College is "a world order where the threats are both diffuse and uncertain, where conflict is inherent yet unpredictable, and where our capability to defend and promote our national interests may be restricted by materiel and personnel resource constraints. In short, an environment marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA)."[11] In the words of Harry R. Yarger the strategic environment means:

For the state, the strategic environment is the realm in which the leadership interacts with other states or actors to advance the well-being of the state. This environment consists of the internal and

external context, conditions, relationships, trends, issues, threats, opportunities, interactions, and effects that influence the success of the state in relation to the physical world, other states and actors, chance, and the possible futures.[12]

The understanding of strategic environment is prerequisite to achieve the political objectives. Sun Tzu's famous dictum: "know your enemy; know yourself," necessitates adequate grasp or comprehension of the strategic environment in which we operate. Central to any such understanding is knowledge, about our war-fighting capability; our enemies; and our auxiliary forces.[13] The strategic decision-makers always intelligently chalk out their strategy according to the classic strategic hierarchy i.e. 'Shape-Deter-Respond'. Its order of priorities is: first, influence the environment in which we function — political, diplomatic, economic, social, cultural, military, geographic — towards our interests; second, if shaping is not entirely successful, deter behavior that might be inimical to those interests; and last, if deterrence fails, respond as necessary anywhere along the spectrum of influence from, say, soft sanctions at one extreme to war at the other.[14]

State pre-eminent actor in Strategic Environment

Since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, the State has been the pre-eminent actor in the strategic environment. All other actors in this environment — individuals, international organizations, etc — are either less important or unimportant. Harry R. Yarger pointed out that: "The strategic environment functions as a self organizing complex system. It seeks to maintain its current relative equilibrium, or to find a new acceptable balance. In this environment, some things are known (predictable), some are probable, some are plausible, some are possible, and some remain simply unknown."[15] In this complex environment the state's primary responsibility is to pursue its national interest. The national interest is a multifaceted and can be oriented on political, economic, military, or cultural objectives. The most significant interest is the state survival and security. The structural realists posit that the world is anarchy – a domain without a sovereign. In that domain, states must look to themselves to survive. Because no sovereign can prevent states from

doing what they are able to do in their strategic environment, therefore, war is possible. Kenneth N. Waltz pointed out: "The state among states, it is often said, conducts its affairs in the brooding shadow of violence. Because some states may at any time use force, all states must be prepared to do so—or live at the mercy of their militarily more vigorous neighbors."[16] Hence, the strategic environment legitimizes the states' preparation for war for the sake of their survival.

The sovereign states vigilantly monitor their strategic environment and sanction financial resources for their military buildups. It is because; the key to survival in war is military power – generated either internally or through alliances, and usually both.[17] In the words of Czeslaw Mesjasz; "The traditional meaning of security is deriving from foreign policy and international relations— 'objective security' 'military security'. Security is treated as an attribute of situation of the state, equivalent to absence of military external conflict."[18] Moreover, mistrust, insecurity, and the imperatives of self-help incline states to hedge their bets by balancing against the strongest state rather than climbing on its bandwagon. This is the safer strategy because states fear that a strong or potentially hegemonic state could threaten them, even if they initially align with it.[19] Therefore, the states always struggle to acquire and maximize their power, especially military power to pursue their objectives or defend goals that could include prestige, territory, or security. Power in the international system is the ability of an actor or actors to influence the behavior of other actors — usually to influence them to take action in accordance with the interests of the power wielding state. There are two general components of power: hard and soft. Hard power refers to the influence that comes from direct military and economic means. This is in contrast to soft power, which refers to power that originates with the more indirect means of diplomacy, culture, and history.[20] Thomas Schelling pointed out four different ways in which power could be used, i.e. deterrence, compellence, coercion, and brute force.[21] Importantly, when state employs brute force in pursuit of its objective or interest in the international system, it is launching a war.

War, State & Strategic environment

In the relations of states, with competition unregulated, war occasionally occurs. It is because war is a normal way of conducting disputes between sovereign political groups. Rousseau pointed out that if one had no sovereign states one would have no war.[22] Importantly, War has been defined in various ways. In simple, one can define it as the use of armed forces in a conflict, especially between countries. It is a sustained inter-group violence (deliberately inflicting death and injury) in which state military forces participate on at least one side — on both sides in the case of interstate war and generally on only one side in the case of civil war. The conventional view is that for a conflict to be classified as a war, it should culminate in at least 1,000 battle deaths. This definition allows for the inclusion of other wars such as a civil war within a state.[23]

Many analysts are convinced that state is a product of war. The State come into being and has its geographical extent delineated as the result of political processes in which the actual or potential use of force often plays a considerable part; the similar processes may dissolve and destroy them. This is not of course universally and necessarily the case. Many states have come into existence without war, for example, the birth of Pakistan and independence of Bharat (India) from the British occupation in August 1947. Importantly, the independence and partition of subcontinent was possible only because the communities concerned made clear both their will and capacity to assert their independence by force if they were debarred from attaining it by peaceful means. In the words of Michael Howard, "the cost of holding a rebellious India in check indefinitely was rated by the British as being impracticably high, and other colonial powers came ultimately to the same conclusion."[24] Howard added, "Israel owes her existence as a state, not to recognition by the United Nations, but to her victories in the wars of 1949 and 1967."[25] North Atlantic Treaty Organization forces, instead of the United Nations, liberated Kosovo in 1999. The United States launched Operation Iraqi Freedom to prevent Saddam Husain from acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction in March 2003. These factors prove

that use of force remains an important fact in the community of sovereign states.

Military Role: Categorization of War

The military role is viewed as a consequence of responses by military establishment to requirements and conditions in the larger social order.[26] It can be divided into two categories. First, and most evident, is the traditional and primary role of acquiring a sufficient monopoly in the means of force and violence to accomplish three purposes:

> ➢ Defend the society from external aggression — *Defensive War.*
> ➢ Conduct aggressive military action against actual or potential enemies — *Preventive war or Offensive war.*
> ➢ Maintain law and civil order within the society — Low Intensity Conflict or in extreme sense *Civil War.*[27] Edward Rice called this category 'wars of the third kind'. Such wars are usually fought in what used to be called the Third World and rely heavily, although not exclusively, on guerrilla warfare. The concept is more accurate than the term 'low-intensity conflicts', which sanitizes what can be extremely intense armed conflicts.[28]

War and Systemic Change in Strategic Environment

In the international politics it is an established fact that privileged state or dominate state always tries to preserve the status quo in the system. In the pursuit of status quo the dominant power generally tries, but fails, to reduce its commitments or expand its resources base. Therefore, no state or empire has ever been large, rich or powerful enough to maintain hegemony over the political world, let alone to establish political and military supremacy over the globe.[29] Despite, the fact that world is too big, complicated, and plural the dominant power attempts to hold its dominant position by initiating a preventive war against a rising challenger. Jack S. Levy

argued: "Whether intended or not, a hegemonic war determines who will govern the international system and whose interests will be primarily served by the new international order. It leads to a redistribution of territory, a new set of rules, and a new international division of labor."[30] Conversely, the cyclical theory or Organski concept of the power transition underlines that the likelihood of a major war leading to systemic change is greatest when the military capabilities of an underdog state begin to approach those of a dominant power. The rising state will initiate a war in order to gain political influence commensurate with its newly acquired power. All kinds of wars, i.e. hegemonic, preventive or liberating, have altering impact on the regional or strategic environment.

Significant Actors: Drivers for Change

The key actors in world politics are sovereign states. Among the sovereign states, the Super Power(s) and Great Power(s) have important role in the orientation of strategic environment. The present leading powers — United States, Russian Federation, Great Britain, France, and China — being permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have veto power in the Council. They greatly influence the decision-making processes in the United Nations. These five states are also nuclear weapons states. That is why, they cannot be nuclear blackmailed and militarily coerced. In the economic and technological realm Germany and Japan are also leading members of the international community and they do influence the strategic environment of the international system. Though, they did not develop their own nuclear deterrence capabilities, but both the states enjoy positive nuclear security guarantees. In addition, it is an open secret that Germany and Japan maintain advanced nuclear programs, therefore, it is said that they have nuclear bombs capability in the 'basement'.

There are a few Regional Powers, in addition to a Super Power and the Great Powers, which have acquired and preserve military potential to influence their respective regions' strategic environment. India is a significant actor in the Southern Asian strategic environment. Pakistan is an important actor in the South-West Asian strategic enclave. Both India and Pakistan are overt

nuclear powers since May 1998 and greatly influence the Indian Ocean strategic environment. Though North Korea's role was earlier limited in the Korean peninsula, its nuclear weapon tests in October 2006 and May 2009; and subsequent testing of long-range ballistic missile broaden its strategic sway. Israel has marshaled immense strategic potential by its advanced military buildup, including clandestine nuclear weapons program and strong alliance with the United States and Western powers. Importantly, Israel has maintained an opaque nuclear posture, i.e. neither confirming nor denying its nuclear capability since the late 1960s. The scientists' team headed by Yevgeni Jenka Ratner did a cold testing, in which each one of the processes that together create the explosion is checked by simulation, at RAFAEL nuclear facilities on November 2, 1966.[31] Later Israel conducted nuclear test with the connivance of South Africa on September 22, 1979 over the South Atlantic.[32] Presently, Tel Aviv possessed around 100-170 nuclear weapons deployed on missiles, aircrafts and submarines. [33] Barry Lando pointed out: "Foreign experts have long concluded that Israel is the sixth-largest nuclear weapons power in the world — ahead of India and Pakistan."[34] Israeli leaders have consistently argued that nuclear weapons are important for the country's security because it is surrounded by rival Arab states. [35] Its policies have deterministic impact on the Middle Eastern and Arab states strategic environment. The following two tables manifest the strategic capability of the influential states in the global and regional strategic environments.

International Actors	Defence Budget in US $ 2008	Active Troops	Reserve Troops	Population
United States	693 bn	1,539,587	979,378	303,824,646
Russian Federation	36.35 bn	1,027,000	20,000,000	140,702,094
United Kingdom	59.7 bn	160,280	199,280	60.943,912
France	41.1 bn	352,771	70.300	64,057,790
China	61.1 bn	2,185,000	800,000	1,330,044,605
Japan	47.3 bn	230,300	41,800	127,288,419
Germany	39.86 bn	244,324	161,812	82,369,548

International Actors	Defence Budget in US $ 2008	Active Troops	Reserve Troops	Population
Regional Actors				
India	25.3 bn	1,281,200	1,155,000	1,147,995,898
Pakistan	3.56bn+297 m(FMA US)	617,000	?	167,762,040
North Korea	?	1,106,000	4,700,000	23,479,089
Israel	9.26bn+2.38 bn(FMA-US) =11.64 bn	176,500	565,000	7,112,359

Source: *The Military Balance 2009*, International Institute for Strategic Studies (London: Routledge, January 2009), pp, 31, 119, 124, 158, 217, 249, 345, 353, 381-382, 391, 394.

Status of Nuclear Forces in 2009

Country	Strategic	Non-Strategic	Total Operational	Total Inventory
United States	2,200	500	2,700	9,400
Russian Federation	2,787	2,050	4,837	13,000
United Kingdom	160	n.a	<160	185
France	300	n.a	~ 300	300
China	180	?	~180	240
India	60	n.a.	n.a.	60-80
Pakistan	60	n.a.	n.a.	70-90
Israel	80	n.a	n.a	80
North Korea	<10	n.a	n.a	103
Total	5,847	2,550	8,187	23,375

The exact number of nuclear weapons in global arsenals is not known; each country guards these numbers as closely held national secrets. The status of nuclear forces in 2009 was compiled by Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists and

Robert Norris of the Natural Resources Defense Council (both with support from Ploughshares Fund) and are based on publicly available information and occasional leaks.[36]

The United States

In the contemporary global strategic environment the most important and trend-setting Great Power is the United States, which is also qualified to be considered or labeled as a sole-super-power due to its hard and soft powers potential. It has unprecedented accumulation of military and economic power. The preceding tables manifest the margin of the military power that separate the United States from every other country. The American defense budget exceeded, in dollars expended, the military spending of the next fifteen countries combined, and the United States had military assets — highly accurate missiles, for example — that no other country possessed.[37] The combination of overwhelming economic and military power gives the United States enormous political influence throughout the world. T.R. Reid pointed out: "the US with its globe-circling missiles and its bristling naval task groups and its fleet of long-range bombers, with planes in the air every minute of every day, has built a military force that can carry American power anywhere on earth, almost instantly."[38] Though it towers rest of the great powers, yet it has failed to accomplish its global agenda, unilaterally.

The developments in the aftermath of 9/11 have proved that United States has certain limitation and, thereby it cannot individually solve puzzles such as global terrorism and nuclear proliferation. In this context, it requires the cooperation of other states. Kenneth N. Waltz claimed: "The biggest early effects were felt in the policies and politics of the United States. The new Bush administration instantly turned from strident unilateralism to urgent multilateralism"[39] The United States very much depend on the support of other actors in pursuit of its strategic objectives in Afghanistan and Iraq. In the war on terrorism the US is dependent on the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Pakistan. Similarly, to contain the North Korean and Iran's nuclear programs, it is relying on the collective effort of states such

as, Russian Federation, China etc. On 15 June 2006 the members of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, in their Shanghai Summit Declaration, categorically rejected Bush Administration's unilateral approach and supported the right of all countries to safeguard their national unity and their national interests, pursue particular models of development and formulate domestic and foreign policies independently, and participate in international affairs on an equal basis.[40] Despite these realistic accounts, the United States have primacy in the international strategic environment.

Russian Federation

The demise of the former Soviet Union, outcome of the Cold War and wars in Chechnya dented Moscow's capacity to influence the international strategic environment. However, gradually Moscow restored its image as a significant international actor. The high oil and gas prices in the international market brought an impressive growth in the Russian economy. The national and international image of the Russian armed forces has risen after the successful military operation launched against Georgia from August 7-12, 2008. It was the first time that Russian forces fought in a conventional operational setting since the end of the Cold War. Meanwhile, the Russian Navy and Air Force have deployed in areas of the world where there had not been a significant Russian military presence for some time. These deployments have more to do with the harder line in Moscow's dealings with the US and its allies.[41] In February 2008, a naval battle-group from the Northern Fleet led by the carrier *Admiral Kuznetsov* completed a two-month deployment, which included a period in the Mediterranean. This was one of the longest deployments undertaken by the Russian Navy since the Cold War, and it was hailed by military and political leaders in Moscow as a sign of Russia's re-establishment as a global maritime power and an exhibition of the capacity to defend its interest abroad. Similarly celebrated was the October 2008 deployment, first to the Mediterranean and then to the Caribbean, of the nuclear-powered missile cruiser *Pyotr Veliki* (Peter the Great). The stated objective of this deployment was to carry out joint naval training with the Venezuelan Navy. This deployment exemplified Moscow's cooperation in the Washington's sphere of influence.[42]

United Kingdom and France

In May 2008 the United Kingdom expressed its intention to proceed with plans to build two new Queen Elizeabeth-class aircraft carriers.[43] It displayed London's desire to maintain an expeditionary-warfare capability. In practice, United Kingdom would seek to increase its influence, certainly to 'punch above its weight', by serving as America's faithful lieutenant.[44] According to France's White Paper on defence and security policy, published in June 2008, Paris has been focusing on the troubled arc from North Africa through the Middle East and the Indian Ocean. France maintains its bases in the region at Reunion and Djibouti, as well as planned base at Abu Dhabi. Importantly, United Kingdom and France role in the current international strategic environment is very much dependent on the strategic outlook of the United States.

China

In the current global system, China is the most obvious power on the rise having the world's third largest economy.[45] According to James F. Hoge, Jr., "China's economy is expected to be double the size of Germany's by 2010 and to overtake Japan's, currently the world's second largest, by 2020."[46] The rising economic strength of China has been contributing positively in the steady improvement in its long-range military capabilities.[47] For instance, China has been in the process of modernizing its strategic missile forces. China deploys several types of ballistic missiles, but only DF-5 (13,000 kilometer range) is an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile by Western standards and is capable of reaching the continental United States.[48] The trends indicate that in the near future, its long-range striking power would be multiplied. Many strategic analysts, therefore, have a consensus that China's economic and military development would enable China as an important balancer in the global strategic environment. Thomas J. Christensen's claimed: "with certain new equipment and certain strategies, China can pose major problems for American security interests."[49] In his confirmation hearing on January 17, 2001, Colin Powell, the US Secretary of State, while rejecting Clinton Administration's depiction that China is a strategic partner declared

China was a competitor and a potential regional rival of the United States.[50] Similarly, in the Southern Asia, China's emerging economic and strategic power is viewed by India and Japan as a strategic challenge. Therefore, Tokyo and New Delhi have been cementing their bilateral strategic alliance and at the same time they are strengthening their strategic cooperation with the United States.

India

India's pivotal position in Southern Asia, its strategic location between Western Asia and Southeast Asia, and its emergence as an economic power places it in a special league. Since the end of Cold War, India has been cementing its' relations with the United States. It has positioned itself to face the rise of China and began to work closely with the world's sole superpower. Washington reciprocated by supporting New Delhi's drive for Great Power status in the 21st century. India and United States finalized nuclear deal in October 2008 for a far-reaching strategic partnership. The Indo-US nuclear deal acknowledged India as a legitimate nuclear power, ending New Delhi's 30-year quest for such recognition.[51] The emergence of India as a major global player would transform the regional geopolitical landscape.

Pakistan

Pakistan occupies central positioning in the South-West Asian strategic environment. It can play indisputable role in the realms of the war on terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, engaging moderate Muslim countries, and access to Central Asia. Pakistan is a moderate Muslim country that has constructive influence in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. President Barack Obama placed Pakistan on the top of his foreign policy agenda, because without the sincere and practical support of Islamabad, Washington would not be able to carry on its present campaign against Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. President Obama appointed a special representative Richard Holbrooke for Pakistan and Afghanistan as part of a comprehensive strategy to combat the menace of terrorism. On September 8, 2009 US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates

acknowledged that "Pakistan is very important. It is important intrinsically to the United States."[52]

Presently, Pakistan is playing a front line state role in the ongoing War on Terrorism. Its geographical position on the southern and eastern borders of landlocked Afghanistan is the best location for supporting the US and NATO led ISAF military campaign against Taliban and Al Qaeda strongholds. In this context, the US President officially announced the designation of Pakistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally of the United States in June 2004. Its Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), bordering Afghanistan has been exploited by Afghan Taliban and Al Qaeda for their mobile training camps and sanctuaries. Pakistan's military operation targeting Tehrik-e-Taliban and its foreign associates like Al Qaeda members was accomplished successfully in Swat. The Armed forces have launched military operation in the South Waziristan. Moreover, Armed forces have been effectively chasing and purging both the local and transnational terrorists in FATA to restore government's writ in the area. The success of Pakistan's Armed forces in eliminating militants from its territory is a prerequisite for the culmination of ongoing war on terrorism.

Non-state actors: Transnational Terrorists

Washington and New York on September 11, 2001, Madrid, London on July 7, 2005, Islamabad on September 2008 and Mumbai on November 26, 2008 were not attacked by their rival powers but by loose-transnational terrorists groups who drew their inspiration from Al Qaeda headed by Osama bin Laden hiding in, and commanding from a failed state Afghanistan. The terrorists operate in small groups, are indistinguishable from the rest of the population and extremely mobile and lethal in their tactics. Though the terrorists prefer to hit soft targets, but hard targets (properly guarded) are not out of their reach. Their suicidal brigades successfully penetrated in the security alert areas and accomplished the desired goals.

The terrorist attacks and counter-terrorism strategies manifest a major transformation in the strategic environment. In

response to the 9/11 terrorists act, the United States launched a war on terror leaving only two options for other states, i.e. they could cooperate or they would be considered adversaries. Almost all the states, except the Taliban Regime of Afghanistan preferred the former choice. Consequently, United States launched protracted warfare against Afghanistan in October 2001 and preventive war against Iraq in March 2003. These wars, extra-legal detention of suspected terrorists, prisoner abuse, unsettlement of chronic Palestine and Kashmir disputes multiplied anti-Americanism in the Muslim world. These factors undermined the legitimacy of war on terrorism in the Muslim world and provided extremists and terrorists groups with a ready supply of recruits.

The United States and its like-minded states succeeded in changing the regime in Kabul and latter in Baghdad, but failed to deprive Al Qaeda a base in Southern Afghanistan and radical recruits from the entire Muslim world. This signifies a new era of strategic environment in which terrorism posed the most serious threat to international stability and the security of states. Sporadic international terrorist attacks can cause a temporary disruption of economies and services and above all increase perpetual insecurity of the civilians, whose protection is a state's primary responsibility.

Future strategic makeup

The destructive nature of nuclear weapons has minimized the prospects of war between the great powers. If conventional or nuclear war seems increasingly unlikely between the great powers, this benign prospect does not necessarily apply to relations between strong and weak states in the current strategic environment, or between states other than the great powers. Importantly, such wars did not cease during the period of the cold war, which is sometimes misleadingly called the 'long peace'. In the nuclear context, the dangerous strategic competition is a reality. For instance, three paradoxes: the instability/stability paradox; the vulnerability/invulnerability paradox; and the independence/dependence paradox have received significant attention from the South Asian security analysts. In simple terms, the instability/stability paradox states that by preventing total war or

all out war, the destructiveness of nuclear weapons seems to open the door to limited conflicts. The vulnerability/invulnerability paradox refers to the increased risks of unauthorized use, accidents and theft of nuclear assets that arise from attempts to secure them against preemptive strikes.[53] Importantly, the theft of nuclear assets is a contested assertion. The nuclear weapon states are well equipped to guard their nuclear weapons and sensitive to the personal reliability program due to the lethality of nuclear weapons. Therefore, the possibility that terrorists could obtain an actual atomic device or bomb-grade nuclear fissile material (highly enriched uranium or plutonium) is very remote or near to impossibility. More precisely, nuclear weapons are heavily guarded in nuclear weapon states. The dependence/independence paradox refers to the inability of the feuding nuclear rivals to effectively manage situations of crises without the involvement of the third parties.[54] To be precise, the war will remain a mean to pursue the political objects in the rational decision-making context. Colin Gray argued: "The script for statecraft was first written by the Greeks and Romans, now it is played by Americans, Russians, the Chinese and the band of murderous religious zealots."[55] He added that "the United States is behaving towards Al Qaeda exactly as did imperial Rome towards the Jewish zealots (and indeed towards any revolting minority)."[56]

The nature and typology of future wars would be having both traditional and modern characteristics of warfare. The four distinct but interrelated dominant strategic battle-spaces would be direct interstate war, non-state war, intrastate war, and indirect interstate war.[57] In addition, twenty-first-century war would be as much about information as bullets. Today's, military trend setting power, the United States has been planning advanced forms of information warfare, including computer-based sabotage of an enemy's computing, financial, and telephone systems before a shot is fired in anger. This would be backed up by 'cyber attacks' on command and control centres, possibly with the aid of killer satellites.[58] Farzana Shah pointed out: "Cyber warfare is complex, more penetrating and detrimental than conventional warfare, fought on cyberspace using different tactics like Cyber espionage, Web vandalism, Gathering data, Distributed Denial-of-Service Attacks,

Equipment   disruption,   attacking   critical   infrastructure, Compromised Counterfeit Hardware etc.[59] The aim would be to effectively blindfold enemy commanders by robbing them of communication with their troops and knowledge of their positions before physical hostilities begins.[60]

Anticipated Categories of War

The current strategic environment would germinate different categories of wars—hegemonic, preventive and defensive. The ongoing war on terrorism could be labelled as defensive cum preventive war. Since October 2001, the leading capitalist power, the United States, has been in a state of war. In October 2001 it launched Operation Enduring Freedom against the Taliban government and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. Since then, the United States, NATO led ISAF forces have been fighting protracted asymmetrical warfare in Afghanistan. The possibility of other categories of the wars could not be rule out. For instance, many international scholars (dialectical or Marxists theorists) seemed convinced that about the possibility of war resulting from the tendencies of capitalist states to expand in search of external markets, investment opportunities, and raw materials.[61] The political systems of the developed world or great powers have been encouraging the institutionalization of capitalist system in their economic policies. In March 2003, Washington and its like minded states started Operation Iraqi Freedom without the formal approval of United Nations Security Council, due to the fear of Russian Federation and China opposition in the Council. Many analysts called President Bush's Iraqi invasion as an act of hegemonic war or neo-traditional imperialism which would have decisive impact on the global strategic environment. Robert Gilpin pointed out:

"The great turning points in world history have been provided by these hegemonic struggles among political rivals; these periodic conflicts have reordered the international system and propelled history in new and uncharted directions…. The outcomes of these wars affect the economic, social, and ideological structures of individual societies as well as the structure of the larger international system."[62]

Second, the War could be waged without a single bullet being fired between the belligerent states. The threats that the West and its partners face today are a combination of violent terrorism against civilians and institutions, wars fought by proxy by states that sponsor terrorism, the behaviour of rogue states, the actions of organised international crime, and the coordination of hostile action through abuse of non-military means.[63]

Third, the asymmetrical protracted warfare would be a prominent factor in the strategic environment. The asymmetric warfare is a broad and inclusive term, which tries to denote that two sides in conflict may have such drastically different strengths and weakness that they resort to significantly different (asymmetric) tactics to achieve relative advantageous. It indicates that the strong state vs. weak state war is not ignorable. The United States withdrawal from Vietnam War (1965-1975), Former Soviet Union withdrawal from Afghanistan War (1979-1988) and Israel from Lebanon (summer 2006) without accomplishing their desire objectives support this kind of warfare. The weak actor chalk out defensive protracted warfare strategy and by applying Guerilla Warfare tactics to exploit the political vulnerability of the strong state.[64] While analyzing the War on Terrorism, Lawrence Freedom opined: "As battle was joined, the human factor would weigh much more heavily than the technical. If it took too long there was a risk that the American people's patience would wear thin or that the fragile international coalition would buckle."[65]

Fourth, to ensure the nuclear threshold would not be crossed, the nuclear capable states will engage in quick incursions with limited objectives. For instance, on April 28, 2004 at the Army Commanders' Conference, India officially unveiled its new war doctrine 'Cold Start Doctrine'.[66] Walter C. Ladwig III pointed out that "The goal of this limited war doctrine is to establish the capacity to launch a retaliatory conventional strike against Pakistan that would inflict significant harm on the Pakistan Army before the international community could intercede, and at the same time, pursue narrow enough aims to deny Islamabad a justification to escalate the clash to the nuclear level."[67] The Cold Start is bite and hold strategy, which underlines that in any future conflict between

India and Pakistan, the former will follow a blitzkrieg type strategy based on joint operations involving the Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Navy. This Strategy would enable India to mobilize quickly and undertake surprise attacks on Pakistan, keeping the conflict below the nuclear threshold or under the nuclear umbrella. It indicates that the limited war could be viewed as a practical mean to achieve the political objectives instead of total war.

Fifth, the intrastate wars will be more likely, which if left unchecked, could grow or become intolerable to the nation state in particular and international community in general. These wars might be fought along sectarian, ethnic, or religious lines. Some could attract foreign intervention and a few would not magnetize the foreign intrusion. The Kosovo War of March-June 1999 attracted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Sixth, indirect interstate war would be fought between the adversaries. According to Steven Metz and Raymond A. Millen the "indirect interstate war entails proxy aggression by a state through the creation, encouragement, and support of insurgents, terrorists, armed criminal cartels, separatists, or militias which, in turn, undertake aggression against another state. It is a variant of state-on-state conflict, but one in which the aggressor camouflages its actions." [68] For instance, New Delhi alleged Islamabad for supporting Kashmiri freedom fighters in the Indian held Kashmir. Similarly, Islamabad is convinced that the Baluch separatists and other militant groups operating in Pakistan have been supported by New Delhi.

Conclusion

The trend to maximize military capabilities prove that in the contemporary strategic environment military force remains one of the important determinants to gain respect, instill caution, and ensure that diplomatic pressure is credible. This strategic approach underlines war as an acceptable and desirable way of achieving political objectives. The Global War on Terrorism in general and Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom in

particular validate war to be the best mean of protecting and forwarding the national interest of the state. In the South Asian context, the possibility of war is not ignorable because India and Pakistan have remained in a state of tension due to internal conflicts and external dangers. New Delhi and Islamabad have been diverting huge and precious financial resources to military sector for the development of both conventional and nuclear weapons. In brief, the upsurge in India and Pakistan military capabilities reveal that like sole super power-United States, and other Great Powers; both states are convinced that military capabilities are essential for guarding their national interests in the current regional and international strategic environment.

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*http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.*mil*/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=641,* Accessed on September 4, 2009.

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[12] Ibid, p. 17.

[13] As the army maxim has it, time spent on reconnaissance, on gathering information, is never wasted. It is for this very good reason that espionage was supported since the very beginning by the Hebrew Bible, Sun Tzu's Art of War, Kutaliya's Arthshaster, Islamic strategy and to date.

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[17] Barry R. Posen, "European Union Security and Defence Policy: Response to Unipolarity?'' *Security Studies,* Vol. 15, No. 2, April–June 2006, p. 153.

[18] Czeslaw Mesjasz, "Complexity Studies and Security in the Complex World: An Epistemological Framework of Analysis," *Chapter (Draft Version),* Cracow University of Economics, Cracow, Poland, p. 2.

[19] Steve Yetiv, "The Travails of Balance of Power Theory: The United States in the Middle East," *Security Studies,* vol. 15, No. 1, January–March 2006, pp. 70-71.

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[21] Ibid., pp. 9-10

[22] Michael Howard, *The Causes of War and other essays* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 9.

[23] Martin Griffiths, Terry O'Callaghan, Steven C. Roach, *International Relations: The Key Concepts,* Second Edition (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 326.

[24] Michael Howard, *The Causes of War and other essays,* Op. cit., p. 37.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ritchie P. Lowry, " To Arms: Changing Military Roles and the Military-Industrial Complex," *Social Problems,* Vol. 18, No. 1, Summer 1970, p. 3.

[27] The military is used to patrol the countryside, in riot control, as secret police, and conduct counter-insurgency operations.

[28] Martin Griffiths, Terry O'Callaghan, Steven C. Roach, *International Relations: The Key Concepts,* op. cit, p. 333.

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[32] Reference No. 1 in Saira Khan, *Nuclear Proliferation Dynamics in Protracted Conflicts Regions: A Comparative Study of South Asia and the Middle East* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002) , p. 214.

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