

**PAKISTAN AND THE NPT:
COMMITMENTS AND CONCERNS**

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Abstract

This article presents a look at Pakistan's policy option on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) discussing both its commitments and concerns. It shows how Pakistan initially remained committed to the formation of the NPT and favoured the arms control and disarmament process between the established nuclear-weapon states and yet has never become part of the NPT. It discusses why Pakistan shifted its perception on the NPT from a normative to strategic approach. More interestingly, the article analyses various fundamental variables which hamper Pakistan's way to sign the NPT, thus, making its position on the treaty more complex and ambiguous. The article concludes that unless these NPT-related concerns are fully addressed and understood at the international, regional, and inter-state levels, Pakistan appears committed to its options of security-orientation and nuclear legitimacy.

Introduction

One of the good news about the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is that today it has nearly 190 member-states. However, Israel, India and Pakistan (smaller nuclear weapon states) have not been the NPT members, since it was first opened in 1968 for signatures and then enforced in 1970 with ultimate aim of complete disarmament. North Korea withdrew in 2003 to test its nuclear weapons as the NPT Article-10 gives a right of withdrawal if an extra-ordinary occasion jeopardizes the supreme interest of a state. It is often stated that the NPT has been a landmark treaty in at least controlling and minimizing the proliferation if not eliminating nuclear weapons completely. It is also considered that there would have been more than 40 states in possession of nuclear weapons, had there been no NPT.¹ Although there

was a fear of total failure – thus an indefinite collapse of the NPT – its members now celebrate the indefinite life extension to the treaty after 25 years of its enforcement in 1995 NPT review conference. After more than 40 years of the inception of NPT, the regime still strives for arms reduction, verified non-proliferation, complete disarmament of its members, and bringing the three smaller nuclear-weapon states of the second atomic age to join the treaty.²

Pakistan is one of the minor nuclear-weapon states the international community is urging upon along with its adversary, to join the NPT. From the publically available sources and various other factors, Pakistan does not seem to be ready to become part of the NPT although it was one of the early enthusiasts in support of arms control and disarmament and often proposed many recommendations to the would-be NPT formation. Arguably, Pakistan has an unambiguous role in the formation of, first, Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) in 1963 whilst proposing arms control and disarmament plans to the Cold War nuclear rivals – the US and former USSR (now Russia) — and later the NPT in 1968-1970, which is discussed later. In the meantime, one of the bad news about the NPT is that it has still many ambiguous clauses and loopholes due to which it has not been completely successful in achieving its objectives related to a complete disarmament. The critics urged that unless a concrete modification in its framework was devised, the goal for a Global Zero (GZ) would remain a pipe-dream and till then, the permanent five (P-5) of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) — the US, Russia, UK, France and China — would enjoy the status of Nuclear Weapon States (NWSs), as the treaty proposed, and all of its other members would stay Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWSs), and those who yet to join the NPT would unconditionally do so, if they were willing, as NNWSs. In other words, those states that have tested and acquired nuclear weapons before January 1, 1967 will *only* remain nuclear weapon states. However, they are obligated to a general and complete disarmament, and the rest of the member states agree not to acquire nuclear weapons, or join the NPT with no nuclear legitimacy if they choose to do so. In the absence of a special status (legitimacy and recognition of minor nuclear weapon

states), it apparently becomes difficult for the non-NPT-Nuclear Weapon States to join the NPT. Similarly, in the presence of dubiousness within the provisions of the NPT and the presence of nuclear weapons in the world, it is unlikely that the established nuclear weapon states would renounce their nuclear weapons soon.

This article also looks at Pakistan's policy of commitment and concerns on the NPT. It discusses how it develops a normative argument for formation of the NPT and why it later shifts to a strategic approach towards the NPT. Also, it discusses various contending variables that make Pakistan's position harder to sign the NPT. It concludes that unless these hurdles are addressed and Pakistan's concerns are understood at the international, extra-regional and inter-state levels, Pakistan may retain its strategic approach without becoming part of the NPT.

Pakistan's Commitments to the NPT

Shifting Thoughts from Normative to Strategic Approach: Pakistan was born as a weak state with little or no major military build-up for the survival of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. It confronted the initial debilitating economic and social conditions; it lost the genuine political leadership soon after the independence; and the new-born state found itself in the hot-bed of geo-political environment (the Great Game) whose heat is still felt today even after it became a nuclear weapon state. Pakistan, in its initial years of independence, remained inexperienced in the world politics of major powers. It takes time for a fledgling state to learn with its environment. It took time for Pakistan to formulate its policy options of arms control and disarmament. Pakistan thought that the early solutions for the then fast growing conventional and nuclear weapons would emerge out of deliberate efforts of the major powers.³ For example, on the fourth session of General Assembly in 1949, Pakistani representative to UN General Assembly Sarwar Hassan stated that, "the constantly increasing anxiety of the people of the world could be allayed only by a genuine agreement providing for effective guarantee amongst the nations possessing atomic energy and atomic weapons."⁴ On the

6th Session of United Nations General Assembly, Pakistan remained committed and active in proposing arms control and disarmament resolutions which could not only urge member states to control the arms spread but also look forward to eradicating the atomic and weapons of mass destruction.⁵

Pakistan's policy option on the Non-Proliferation Treaty evolved gradually. It adopted more realistic and pragmatic approach in the process of world's complete disarmament. Pakistan joined the two important US-supported security alliances South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and Central Treaty Organization, (CENTO) in 1955. Pakistan supported the Western powers parameters in terms of dealing with the issues of armed forces by adopting and setting up the mechanism of concrete inspection and verification of proliferation and disarmament. Pakistan along with its western alliance thought that without these set linkages (e.g., inspection, detections, verification etc.), dealing with arms control and disarmament issues was difficult, if not impossible, to be carried. In this period of 1950s, Pakistan also supported India's concerns on the fast development, nuclear tests, and deployment of nuclear weapons and urged the UN General Assembly to suspend the nuclear weapon tests.

However, a dramatic shift in Pakistan's policy option on arms control and disarmament issues came after the US-backed security alliances sidelined Pakistan in its major foreign and strategic policymaking processes. Pakistan felt isolated and abandoned when it got suspicious that the US supported India economically and militarily more than Pakistan, despite having a full membership in SEATO and CENTO. The US supported India as its "natural choice", against the communist China which remained a cause of concern for Pakistan. The US-Pakistan strategic and military relations on this premise are elaborated well in the writings of Pakistan's ex-President Ayub Khan.⁶ Secondly, Pakistan instead of seeking military and economic support as a member of the security alliance system, received arms embargo in its war with its adversary in 1965. Thirdly, Pakistan observed that India was trying to

acquire nuclear weapons technology. Therefore, Pakistan feared that a maximalist approach of armament between the two Cold War rivals increased the danger of not only 'vertical proliferation' but also 'horizontal proliferation.' Pakistan expressed its concerns that nuclear weapons technology could spread to non-nuclear weapon states. Pakistan's first military general Ayub Khan reflected on this premise in his address to the 17th session of UN General Assembly in September 1962 that, "An aspect of disarmament which is of deep concern to Pakistan is the clear and present danger of the spread of nuclear weapons and the knowledge of their technology to states which do not now possess them."⁷

In the wake of India's nuclear weapon test in 1974, which it labels as a 'peaceful nuclear explosion' (PNE), Pakistan's chance to become part of the NPT faded. Pakistan spoke against the discriminatory approaches set by the established nuclear weapon states and India's non-availability in the NPT as the fundamental causes of its non-willingness and lack of readiness to sign the NPT. Pakistan's normative paradigm on arms control and disarmament is replaced by the strategic and realistic paradigms that would first emphasize and prioritize the national interest and national security, and formulate the state's policies in accordance with the strategic reality of the time. This can be observed not only by Pakistan's approach to the NPT, but also its policy towards Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).⁸ It is out of context to elaborate Pakistan options on CTBT and FMCT. However, it is interesting to note that Pakistan's policy options on the arms control and disarmament treaties remain more or less similar to that of the NPT.⁹

At the time of NPT's review conference in 1995 when NPT was to be extended for indefinite period, Pakistan had already started a national debate on whether or not to sign the NPT. The pro-NPT group suggested that Pakistan should sign the NPT for economic and military benefits. To them, Pakistan's image before the international community would be enhanced vis-a-vis its adversary. Moreover, the bottom-line for this group was that Pakistan could withdraw from treaty on the national security grounds and it was better for Pakistan to sign given its economic

fragility which could get treated by the incoming economic and military assistance.¹⁰ The anti-NPT group urged the state to keep the national interest and geopolitical realities into consideration. It is interesting to note that Pakistan's Security Epistemic Community (SEC)¹¹, in favour of Pakistan's nuclear testing, emphasized Pakistan's option of nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes, which perhaps played a decisive role in persuading the government to conduct nuclear weapon tests. The SEC insisted that Pakistan had to unveil its nuclear ambiguity and test nuclear weapons. For example, Tariq Jan's 1995 edited volume including other seminal works stated that to deter adversary and offset the conventional disparity the nuclear option was important for Pakistan. In their views, Pakistan had to "go nuclear", both to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The volume condemned the NPT's nuclear discriminations and urged Pakistan's nuclear leadership to be self-reliant in respect of its nuclear weapons acquisition.¹²

Pakistan, despite its consistent support to the NPT's life on the basis of opened, balanced, and verified approach, has changed its line of perception. This change of perception is security-oriented. It not only wants its adversary to sign and ratify the NPT but also strongly desires nuclear legitimacy before joining the treaty. Pakistan's national security interest replaces its traditional normative approach when it comes to Pakistan's policy on the NPT. Therefore, it was observed that Pakistan did not sign the NPT, rather tested nuclear weapons in reaction to India's nuclear tests in May 1998. Pakistan may not become a part of the NPT for various fundamental reasons. These concerns are elaborated in the following section.

Pakistan's Concerns and the NPT

Loopholes and Weaknesses within the NPT

There are weaknesses and loopholes within the NPT which are often exploited by both nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states of the NPT, and also the non-NPT nuclear weapon states. Despite the NPT's

existence for more than 40 years and an increase in its membership, nuclear weapons are not eliminated. Both established and minor nuclear weapon states desire to keep nuclear weapons for security and deterrence purposes even if they talk of reducing the numbers to a prescribed minimum level. The NNWSs of the NPT become the tacit audience to the existing debilitated structure of the treaty.

First, the NPT has been so formulated that, due to the impasse created by the US and former Soviet Union (now Russia), it does not elaborate the complete mechanism of the elimination of nuclear weapons and provide surety if the non-nuclear weapon states of the NPT would either remain a part of the treaty or withdraw on an extra-ordinary security condition. There is also a sheer absence of discussion on the transfer of the US nuclear weapons to the US-led NATO allies for extending and guaranteeing security of NATO allies. Despite the reduction of US-transferred tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) to a few NATO allies, there are still approximately 200 TNWs stationed that could be readied and deployed in the event of major conventional war with its adversary.¹³ Russia on the other hand has about 2,000 of TNWs to bolster its weak conventional forces. The NPT is silent on this perspective. NATO's Deterrence and Defense Posture Review (DDPR) recently highlighted the importance of NATO-nuclear alliance in which nuclear weapons remain to be central exponents. The DDPR stated, "As long as nuclear weapons exist, NATO will remain a nuclear alliance. The supreme guarantee of the security of the allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces of the alliance, particularly those of the United States."¹⁴

Second, the provisions within the formation of the NPT seem blurred and create contradiction for the future survival of the NPT. For example, article 1 of the NPT prohibits the nuclear weapon states party to the NPT to "undertake not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons of explosive devices directly or indirectly."¹⁵ Similarly, in accordance with the article 2 of the NPT, "the non-nuclear weapon states party to the treaty undertakes not to receive the transfer from any

transferor whatsoever of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or of control over such weapons or explosive devices directly or indirectly.”¹⁶ The US’s transfer of technology and its NATO-led allies being the recipients of TNWs with consistence somewhat violate the provisions of the NPT. In addition, the recent US-India nuclear deal, which involves the transfer of nuclear technology to India and encourages Russia and Australia to strike the similar deals with India, is considered to be a violation of the NPT that, in turn, provides incentive for other established nuclear weapon states of the NPT to assist states outside the treaty.¹⁷ At the same time, both member and non-member states of the NPT can claim the possession of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes as their “inalienable right” which, in turn, can be converted into military purposes as both International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the NPT have not developed thorough safeguards procedures due to which member states are able to cheat.¹⁸ On the one hand, the NPT prevents states from transferring nuclear weapons and their related technology to other states directly or indirectly, while on the other, it makes a provision for securing the similar technology as an “inalienable right.”

Third, the NPT creates discrimination among nuclear haves and have-nots. It permits the established nuclear weapon states such as the US, Russia, UK, France, and China to be legitimate nuclear weapon states and denies this legitimacy not only to member states of the NPT but also to non-member NPT nuclear weapon states.¹⁹ It is one of the major obstacles for non-member NPT nuclear weapon states to sign the treaty. It becomes a loophole within the treaty that could allow other states to develop and acquire nuclear weapons.

Fourth, the NPT provides a provision of withdrawal to all its member states. In accordance with the article 10 of the NPT, a member state “has the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extra-ordinary events, related to the subject matter of this Treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interest of its country.”²⁰ This indicates: 1) the NPT member state can withdraw from the treaty anytime it deems necessary; 2) there is no clause of punishment in relation to its withdrawal; 3) the withdrawn

state can develop and acquire nuclear weapons because of “the extraordinary event” that damages the “supreme interest” of this state, and 4) any withdrawal from the NPT for protecting the national interest and security, thus, building nuclear weapons is not considered a sheer violation of the NPT. For example, North Korea withdrew from the NPT in 2003 and developed nuclear weapons technology in 2006. Iran, being a member of the NPT, is developing nuclear weapons for security purposes and could withdraw from the NPT enjoying the Article 10 and goes unpunished. Is Iran’s possible military acquisition of nuclear weapons a source of concern for Pakistan’s position on the NPT in general and its implications on the Middle Eastern region including South Asian region in particular? This is discussed next.

Nuclear-Armed Iran

Although any NPT and non-NPT states acquiring nuclear weapons weaken the motives of non-proliferation process of the NPT, security driver in a realist paradigm holds a place that a state confronting acute security threats would enhance its security in an anarchic international system no matter what challenges it confronts. Although there is a divide within the realist paradigm, that is, offensive realism and defensive realism, the overall structural understanding in between the two conceptual operations interlinks when it comes to a state’s security posture. Offensive realism upholds the maximum power (absolute security) whilst defensive realism favours a minimum deterrence (relative security) to seek survival and offset security threats. All states confronting security threats practice one or the other prong of realism. Which conceptual theoretical framework best explains the would-be nuclear-armed Iran is neither the subject this piece discusses, nor it seeks to resolve an intensive debate if nuclear-armed Iran would have positive or negative implications on Middle Eastern region including Pakistan. However, for some nuclear-armed Iran would bring stability in Middle Eastern region to create a balance vis-à-vis the nuclear opacity of Israel.²¹ Others contemplate that nuclear Iran would not only weaken the NPT but also spread the danger of arms race in the region with dire implications for security-

struggling Pakistan.²² Historically, states with acute security threat have already gone nuclear. Iran, being the NPT member, is only allowed to pursue its peaceful nuclear programme. The loopholes within the NPT could provide the withdrawal opportunity to Iran if the security threat increases. Hypothetically through security lenses, the more the security threat increases, the more chances are created for Iran to convert its civilian nuclear programme into military, and the quicker it thinks of withdrawal from the NPT. The lesser is the acuteness of security threats, the slower and more delaying will be the nuclear programme. The length and the context of this piece do not allow testing these hypotheses.

If one considers nuclear Iran a source of concern for Pakistan, then one has to include Iran into a strategic calculation whether or not Iran's nuclear weapons programme is Pakistan centric. One needs then to be contingent and weighs the costs and benefits of this scenario before determining any policy option. It is commonly understood that Iran's nuclear programme, if it emerges as a nuclear weapon state, has much to do with "Israel's regional nuclear monopoly"²³ and a possible pre-emptive strike from both Israel and the US. Iran has observed Israel's pre-emptive strikes against Iraqi nuclear installation in 1981 and the similar type of strikes carried out against Syria's nuclear facility in 2007. Hence the fear of similar strikes exists. Iran could possibly feel to be the next. Iran at present is cautious of pre-emptive strike and considers that a military balance in the region could avert the danger of these strikes. Kenneth Waltz stated that, "In this way, the current tensions are best viewed not as the early stages of a relatively recent Iranian nuclear crisis but rather as the final stages of a decade-long Middle East nuclear crisis that will end only when a balance of military power is restored."²⁴ Iran could be a concern in the NPT context but may not be a major military concern for Pakistan which could be determined as mentioned above. That is, Iran's withdrawal from the NPT and testing nuclear weapons may strengthen Pakistan's concerns against the weak NPT and the disenchanted role of major nuclear weapon states largely in favour of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme. In other words simply, it could provide Pakistan a political leverage against the established nuclear states to secure a nuclear legitimacy before joining the NPT.

The Disenchanted Role of Established Nuclear Weapon States

Although it is considered that the established nuclear weapon states have largely contributed to create and participate in arms control and disarmament treaties including the formation of the NPT, they failed not only to play an effective role in reducing their nuclear weapons to an acceptable minimum level, but also to win the confidence of minor nuclear weapon states in the complete disarmament of nuclear weapons. These established nuclear weapon states have given undertaking in accordance with the NPT's article 6 that they would work together to not only 'cease the nuclear arms race' but also endeavour for a 'general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.'²⁵ It appears that the relationship between the disarmament process and non-proliferation remains delinked.

To strengthen the NPT, the disarmament process needs to be linked with non-proliferation. Although there is an urge that established nuclear weapon states take first initiatives as a moral obligation to reduce their nuclear weapons, the established nuclear weapon states particularly the US and Russia might expect China, India, and Pakistan to join the collective disarmament process. According to James Acton, "During the Cold War, nuclear reductions were essentially a US-Russia bilateral issue. This will change in the not-too-distant future when the downward trajectory of the American and Russian arsenals risks colliding with the upward trajectory in China, India, and Pakistan."²⁶

Nevertheless, hundreds and thousands of nuclear weapons are still in the US and Russia's possession that make the case for the NPT's article 6 weak. In this scenario, neither India nor Pakistan desire to sign the NPT in the foreseeable future. India holds responsible the established nuclear weapon states' nuclear proliferation and the discriminatory inculcations within the NPT. The policy options of both India and Pakistan converge on this point that unless they are declared as legitimate nuclear weapon states and other nuclear weapon states disarm themselves first, both these nuclear rivals may

not become part of the NPT.²⁷ For example, India has always looked at the major nuclear weapon states to disarm them first. As one of Indian representatives stated, “A non-proliferation agreement ... is basically an agreement to be entered into by the nuclear powers not to proliferate nuclear weapons”²⁸ whilst Pakistan’s Foreign Office spokesman, Abdul Basit, told Kyodo News Agency recently that Pakistan has abandoned its historic position of signing the NPT. It would only join the NPT as a recognized nuclear weapon state (NWS).²⁹

The member states could have framed the NPT a decade earlier than it was actually enforced in 1970. The Cold War rivalry between the US and Soviet Union/Russia, that is, the Soviet’s expansion along with its bigger conventional forces, made the US rely on nuclear weapons which, in turn, provided incentives to the US to make the transfer of the nuclear weapons to NATO countries. Faced with these threat perceptions and their individual-centric security interest, the US rejected the Irish proposal in 1959 and Swedish resolutions in 1961.³⁰ The formation of NPT was delayed and the security interest replaced the normative principles for the would-be NPT. Today, both the US and Russia possess thousands of nuclear weapons despite calls for immediate reduction of their armed forces towards a GZ. The US tends to keep its TNWs in a few NATO countries as a security guarantee to its allies. Besides the US and Russia, other established nuclear weapon states such as France, UK, and China are in possession of hundreds, if not thousands, of nuclear weapons with sophisticated delivery systems. The minor nuclear weapon states urge the established nuclear weapon states to play a meaningful role for a complete and verified non-proliferation to provide incentive to smaller nuclear weapon states to be the legitimate part of non-proliferation process. So long as the established nuclear weapon states keep and plan to upgrade and modernize their armed forces, it becomes very difficult for minor nuclear weapons states to forgo their nuclear weapons and sign the NPT.³¹ Besides, there is a danger of more withdrawal of the NPT member states to develop and acquire nuclear weapons for security purposes. This depicts that the US has adopted a policy of ‘conengagement’ – that is, on the one hand it

makes efforts towards non-proliferation calling for GZ, on the other, it does not only modernize its armed forces and work on national missile defence system, but also extend its nuclear deterrence to NATO allies.³² This, in turn, worsens the arms rivalry in South Asia.

India-Pakistan Arms Rivalry

India, observing the US rejection of the previous NPT resolutions and the established nuclear weapon states' denial of granting legitimacy to minor nuclear weapon states before they become party to the NPT, termed the treaty discriminatory. Pakistan maintained, ever since its traditional support to the NPT, that it was ready to sign the treaty if India agreed to Pakistan's proposal of making the region free from nuclear weapons proliferation. This makes the situation complex and interesting for the future research to question the widening gapes between one minor nuclear weapon state and others, and between minor nuclear weapon states and the NPT's declared nuclear weapon states. Unlike today, Pakistan always desired to sign the NPT if India would sign it first. India, while rejecting Pakistan's proposal on various occasions, looks at the complete disarmament at the international level. When Pakistan observed that India was opposing the provisions of the NPT and getting ready to go nuclear, Pakistan developed the perception of acquiring nuclear weapons in reaction. However, Pakistani security establishment proposed to India for making South Asian region a nuclear weapon free zone after India had tested its nuclear weapons in 1974. These proposals include: 1) establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) in South Asia in 1974; 2) joint declaration renouncing the acquisition or manufacture of nuclear weapons in 1979; 3) mutual inspection of nuclear facilities in 1979; 4) simultaneous adherence to the NPT by India and Pakistan in 1979; 5) simultaneous acceptance of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards on all nuclear facilities in 1979; 6) bi-lateral/regional nuclear test ban in 1987; 7) conference on nuclear non-proliferation in South Asia in 1991; 8) zero missile zone in South Asia in 1973, and 9) no war pact in 1997. All proposals were not only rejected by India but also ignored by the international community.³³

It is interesting to note that both India and Pakistan's deterrence capability is in a *formative phase*³⁴ which substantially requires them to maintain and even expand their armed forces (both conventional and nuclear weapons) for credible deterrence purposes. Since both the adversaries have recently ended the first decade of their nuclear weapons, they are engaged in arms race particularly in the development process of missile system.³⁵ The South Asian adversaries on both sides of the borders tend to be highly competitive in terms of developing their nuclear weaponry system like their nuclear predecessors on both sides of the Atlantic in their formative phase of arms development. In such a process of initial years, any substantial talks on either arms reduction or keeping the armed forces either limited or minimum remain a pipe dream at least for the near future. Any proposal and agreement in terms of reducing the armed forces seems difficult, if not impossible, to achieve for the two nuclear adversaries in South Asian region. This creates obstacles for both countries to sign the NPT. For any formidable change in connection with the limitations of armed forces, both the adversaries would need to come out of a formative phase. Like their nuclear predecessors, both India and Pakistan are looking for a second strike capability. In order to accomplish this capability, both would obviously tend to increase and develop sophisticated armed forces including both conventional and nuclear warheads for a triad. It is only fair to ask not what it means by minimum but *why minimum is not the minimum*.³⁶

The consistent arms race and the adversarial shifts of doctrinal provisions in the South Asian region for accommodating triad force build-ups, make Pakistan's stance on signing the NPT more complicated and ambiguous. Pakistan considers its adversary's war-fighting strategy such as Cold Start Doctrine (CSD) and expansion of armed forces via striking deals with foreign partners and private industries as a cause of concern, which encourages Pakistan to build up its armed forces competitively (both qualitatively and quantitatively). For example, India plans for building up sophisticated missile system called Integrated Guided Missile Development (IGMDP) provoke Pakistan's security planners to counterbalance it. In addition, India's doctrinal shifts from 1999 to

2003 in which it is committed to plan for a triad-based armed forces certainly affect Pakistan's doctrinal thinking and its force posture.³⁷ In addition, between these periods of drafting the Indian nuclear posture, India seems to depart from No First Use (NFU) to first use of nuclear weapons. According to Basrur, "NFU is not much used in this respect, it is a promise rather than a guarantee, and adversaries are hardly likely to take it seriously in their calculations of risk, which is the basis of deterrence."³⁸

In the wake of this doctrinal shift, Pakistani leadership raced to build up its armed forces. For example, Pakistan's former President General Pervez Musharraf stated that, "In the past, we used to keep it quantified in the conventional weapons and now, ever since we have faced the nuclear and missile threat, in response, we also quantified that – we quantified the minimum level. And today, I have been very pleased to announce that we have *crossed that minimum deterrence level* [Italics added]."³⁹ However, the absence of trust, pragmatic resolutions of outstanding issues including the core issue of Kashmir, and the absence of political and diplomatic talks on reduction of armed forces make the region more volatile and vulnerable causing further delays on both sides of the border to sign the treaty and increase the chances of arms race in the South Asian region. The political disagreement and mistrust on the ultimate resolutions of security-related issues have intensified the conflicts between India and Pakistan. One of the conditions for arms control in the South Asian region, which then help define the parameters whether or not to sign the NPT, can be the peaceful resolution of all issues between the two sides on converging terms including the creation of Arms Control Regime (ACR) on both sides of the border. However, the extra-regional factor could slow down the policy orientation of ACR's establishment.

Extra-Regional Link

The external factors also become an outstanding hurdle in not only defining the parameters for keeping the *actual* minimum deterrence in its actual conceptual understanding but also creating difficulties for

both the South Asian nuclear adversaries to become part of the NPT. Bhumitra Chakma calls this external-threshold 'extra-regional links' which encourages these two states for more sophisticated arms build-up. Chakma stated, "What happens outside the region, therefore, has a profound bearing on South Asia strategic developments ... Pakistan's security concerns are India-specific; India's strategic worries are tied to China and China's to the United States."⁴⁰ These states in terms of arms proliferation and development are linked together. The tense and strained relationship between the US and China put pressure on the minor nuclear weapon states (India and Pakistan), which in turn, causes the arms race between them. Thus, in this extra-regional-link scenario one can assume that "the key driver of India's nuclear weapons programme is China. Beijing launched its nuclear weapons programme because of the fear of US nuclear arsenal"⁴¹ while Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme, since its inception, has been Indian-specific. In addition, as India is *allergic* to Pakistan-China nexus for development of nuclear and conventional forces, Pakistan also remains allergic to the US-India nuclear deal.⁴² Besides the US-India nuclear deal, India is developing an arms-nexus with foreign powers such as Russia, Australia, and France for its arms build-up and modernization process which, in turn, puts strategic pressure on the other side of the border.

Keeping these ground strategic realities, Khurshid Khan recommends, "the current delicate strategic equilibrium between India and Pakistan may not hold well over the next five to ten years if appropriate measures by Pakistan are not taken because a substantial anti-missile capability with India will make the difference. Pakistan would, therefore, be forced to review its strategic policies."⁴³ It is interesting to see that both India and China have not yet come to a particular ACR which could reduce their armed forces and help Pakistan develop a systematic dialogue on building up an ACR. Therefore, unless there is a unilateral or bilateral arms reduction agreement at the top level or extra-regional level, say, between the US and China or between China and India, it seems difficult to figure out how Pakistan would develop its perception on the NPT and other arms control, and disarmament treaties vis-a-vis its adversary.

This extra-regional link takes us back to the US who has opened the nuclear Pandora's Box for which it becomes morally responsible to close it down.⁴⁴ Despite Obama's ambitious Prague speech in April 2009, bolstered by the former US secretaries' pieces,⁴⁵ to see the world free from nuclear weapons, the actual policymaking depicted in the US Nuclear Posture Reviews (NPRs) contends the consistent reliance on nuclear weapons and its extended deterrence to its alliance including the first use of these weapons against the possible threats both from NWS and NNWS.⁴⁶ The US has refused to ratify the CTBT in 1999 and withdrew from Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABMT) framed in 1972 for building a national missile defence system which has been criticized by Russia.⁴⁷

Despite the call for a GZ, and the US and Russia's pledges for reduction of nuclear armed forces to a minimum level, reliance on nuclear weapons for security purposes still exists. There are still thousands of fissile materials that need to be verified on both sides of the Atlantic whether or not they are for peaceful purposes. Also, other established nuclear weapon states of the NPT need to set-up an unambiguous time-frame for a complete abolition of their nuclear weapons. It is quoted to have said, "Unless the official nuclear powers take steps to uphold their side of the NPT bargain that obliges them to work towards abolishing their nukes in exchange for keeping others from seeking the bomb, this opportunity could be lost. The treaty could unravel. And failure to which would prompt nuclear anarchy."⁴⁸ Any ambiguity in policy options of major nuclear weapon states in connection with their initial efforts for complete disarmament affects the perception of minor nuclear weapon states not yet party to the NPT.

Conclusion

Pakistan has already supported the formation of PTBT and NPT but unfortunately has never become a part of the NPT and other related disarmament treaties. Pakistan had to keep the ground geopolitical and geo-strategic realities into consideration whilst determining whether or

not to be the part of these treaties. Pakistan could not become a part of the NPT when it saw its adversary tested nuclear weapons in 1974 and rejected its various proposals related to making South Asia a nuclear weapon free zone. India's approach to the NPT is different and more ambitious looking for an international abolition of nuclear weapons and its sheer desire for nuclear legitimacy from nuclear weapon states. As a young nuclear weapon state, Pakistan holds some concerns and seems to shift its policy options towards the NPT, demanding not only from India to sign it first but also secure a legitimate nuclear weapon state status before joining the NPT. The Obama's April 2009 Prague speech calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons, the US NPR in 2010, and the Nuclear Security Summit in April 2010 in Washington and 2012 in Seoul have created an opportunity for strengthening the NPT and pressurizing Pakistan directly or indirectly to become the part of NPT and other arms related treaties. Pakistan's security managers do not consider these initiatives as having direct applications to Pakistan.⁴⁹ Despite the internal and external pressures, Pakistan security leadership, keeping the supreme security interest of the state, has not succumbed to these pressures. Pakistan has developed both the normative and strategic learning to forebear these pressures. However, it is through both *factual* and *inferential* nuclear learning,⁵⁰ Pakistan can best manage its nuclear weapons programme and develop concrete nuclear doctrinal postures creating counter-arguments to ease both external and internal pressures.

The existing loopholes and weaknesses within the NPT, the US-India nuclear deal encouraging Australia, Russia, France etc., to strike similar deals with the emerging India, the consistent arms race in South Asian region, the disenchanted role of the major nuclear weapon states, nuclear-armed Iran in the context of the NPT, and the extra-regional link provide sufficient justifications for Pakistan not to sign the NPT and other disarmament related treaties such as FMCT and CTBT. Pakistan seems departed from its traditional stance on the NPT and desires a formal nuclear legitimacy. However Krepon observes, "as far as the CTBT, Pakistan will likely follow the lead of New Delhi, rather than

Washington. Even if the US Senate consented to ratification, Pakistan would likely hold back, waiting India's decision. If India resumes nuclear testing, Pakistan will as well. If India signs the CTBT, Pakistan is likely to follow suit."⁵¹

For the NPT to be successful, all the established nuclear weapon states party to the NPT need to adhere to the NPT's articles 1, 2 and 6 and get rid of their nuclear weapons first which would provide incentives to others. Keeping the first use of nuclear weapons, extended deterrence to allies, consistent reliance on nuclear weapons, and slow progress on the complete disarmament and modification of the current NPT's structure create difficulties not only for the minor nuclear weapon states but also for the NNWS party to the NPT to consider their options open. Unless these concerns are addressed, Pakistan stays committed to its options of security-orientation and a formal legitimate nuclear status. In the meantime, Pakistan as a responsible state may consider to 1) bring its house in order; 2) flourish a genuine democratic process; 3) develop nuclear posture; 4) continue confidence building measures with its counterparts (the US in Afghanistan & India in Kashmir); 5) attend arms control and disarmament related conferences and conventions even if it is not ready to sign or ratify; 6) convince the NPT regime to understand Pakistan's concerns; and 7) stay confident to its security related justifications by not only creating counter-arguments but also demanding the same level of treatment as others get.

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Endnotes

- 1 George Bunn, "The World's Non-Proliferation Regime in Time," *IAEA Bulletin* 46/2, (March 2005), p.8, available at: <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Magazines/Bulletin/Bull462/46203590809.pdf> (accessed on 9 May 2012); and Roland Timerbaev, "What Next for the NPT: Facing the Moment of Truth," *IAEA Bulletin* 46/2, (March 2005), available at: <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Magazines/Bulletin/Bull462/46203590407.pdf> (accessed on 9 May 2012).
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- 8 A Pakistani representative stated in February 2010 Conference on Disarmament that, "along with the commitments to build up its (India's) strategic and conventional capabilities has encouraged its hegemonic ambitions, which are aimed at charting a course of dangerous adventurism whose consequences can both be unintended and uncontrollable...Pakistan would not move forward with negotiations on the FMCT, and by extension, it would continue to expand its stockpiling of fissile material." See for example, Andrew Bast, "Pakistan's Nuclear Calculus," *Washington Quarterly*, (Fall, 2011), 34(4), p.79.
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- 10 Amongst the Pakistan's epistemic community who opposed the ideas and beliefs of acquiring nuclear weapons, Zia Mian, Pervez Hoodbhoy, Inayatullah, and Khalid Ahmed were at the forefront. This opposition to Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weapons can be depicted through their writings in the Zia Mian edited volumes and other short but seminal pieces in the Pakistan's English newspapers and magazines. See for example, Zia Mian, ed., *Pakistan's Atomic Bomb and the Search for Security* (Lahore: Gautam Publishers, 1995) & Smitu Kothari & Zia Mian, eds., *Out of Nuclear Shadow* (London: Zed Books, 2001). Also see, Khalid Ahmed, "Pakistan's America Problem: Crisis of Defiance," *Friday Times*, 24-30 March 1994; Ahmed, "NPT: More Troubles Ahead for Pakistan," *Friday Times*, 1-7 December 1994; Ahmed, "After Hiroshima: Why Do We Still Love the Bomb?," *Friday Times*, 17-23 August 1995; and Ahmed, "The NPT and Pakistan," in Mian, *Pakistan's Atomic Bomb and the Search for Security*, p.115.
- 11 See for example, Zafar Khan, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Testing May 1998: External and Internal Pressures," *IPRI Journal* 12(1), (winter, 2012), pp.28-45. I include SEC all those who one way or the other

Pakistan and The NPT: Commitments and Concerns

remain part of Pakistani establishment, or active contributing in connection to Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme vis-a-vis its adversary in South Asian region.

- 12 There are number of proponents who supported Pakistan acquisition of nuclear weapons in response to its adversarial nuclear weapons tests. Few are mentioned as: Abdul Qayyum, "Nuclear Power and the US Dual Standards," *Dawn*, 26 April 1979; Afzal Mahmood, "Priorities in Foreign Policy," *Dawn*, 14 December 1988; Anwar Shamim, "Pakistan's Security Concerns," *Dawn*, 2 November 1988; Mushahid Hussein, *Pakistan and the Changing Regional Scenario: Reflections of a Journalist* (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1988); K. M. Arif, "Expanding Indo-Israel Nexus," *Dawn*, 17 June 1993; Ghani Eirabi, "Blackmailing Can Backfire," *Dawn*, 18 April 1993; Jafar Wafa, "Our Security Option," *Dawn*, 3 August 1993; Muhammad Aslam Beg, "Who will Press the Button?," *News*, 23 April 1994; Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg (retd), "*Development and Security: Thoughts and Reflections*," (Rawalpindi: Foundation for Research on National Development and Security Press, 1994); Khurshid Ahmed, "Summation: Capping the Nation," in Tariq Jan (ed.), "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 1995), 145-158; Tahir Amin, "The Paradox of Civil-Military-US Triangle and Pakistan's Security," in Jan "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 99-106; Agha Shahi, "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Security Dilemma," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 39-53; Abdul Sattar, "Nuclear Issue in South Asia: A Pakistan's Perspective," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 55-90; K. M. Arif, "Retaining the Nuclear Option," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 121-129; S. M. Koreshi, "The Method in American Duplicity," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 131-136; Syeda Hussein Abida, "Don't Give Up What is Yours and the World will Come Around," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 107-120; Zulfiqar Ali Khan, "Pakistan's Security and Nuclear Option," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 137-144; Shireen M. Mizari, "NPT: An Unfair Treaty Pakistan Must Not Sign," in Jan, "*Pakistan's Security and the Nuclear Option*," 29-38; Haider K. Nizamani, "Nuclear Weapons and Kashmir," *Dawn*, 22 February 1999; Nizamani, *The Roots of Rhetoric: Politics of Nuclear Weapons in India and Pakistan* (USA: Praeger Publications, 2000).
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Pakistan and The NPT: Commitments and Concerns

states in the light of article IX of the NPT despite their nuclear weapon acquisition and when they join the treaty, they will have to forgo their nuclear technology with no nuclear legitimacy.

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Pakistan and The NPT: Commitments and Concerns

- 50 Factual learning involves the learning of basic facts whilst inferential learning involves broader inferences that are drawn from fundamental facts. See for example, Jeffrey W. Knopf, "The Concept of Nuclear Learning," *The Non-Proliferation Review*, 19(1), (2012), pp.79-93.
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