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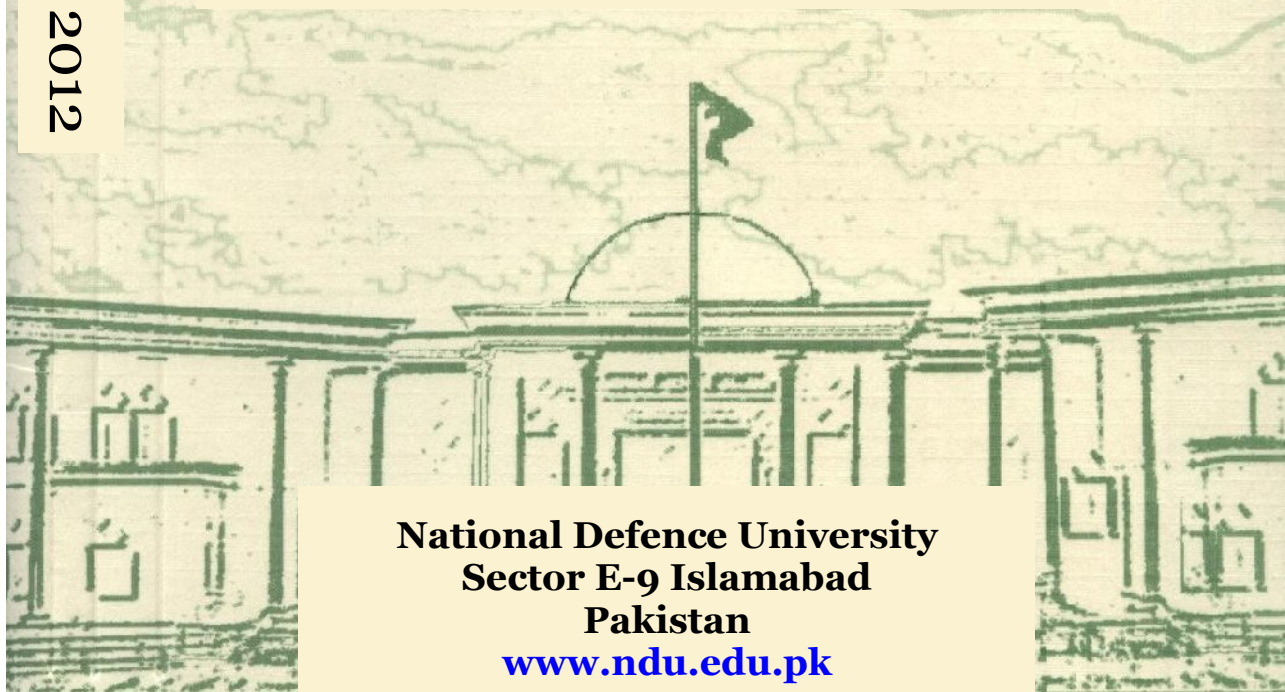


# *Margalla Papers*

**2012**

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**National Defence University  
Sector E-9 Islamabad  
Pakistan**

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## Margalla Papers

**Institute for Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis  
National Defence University, Islamabad**

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The latest issue of the Margalla Papers is on the table after upgradation of its category from 'Z' to 'Y' by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. Under the aegis of the country's premier institution, the National Defence University of Pakistan and ISSRA particularly prides itself in making regular contribution to the strategic thought and policy-making in Pakistan through its publications. The country's premier institution is uniquely placed to invite and incorporate a wide variety of views on matters of National security from the scholars, researchers and practitioners at home and abroad. The current issue is no exception either.

In the first article titled, '*Pakistan and The NPT: Commitments and Concerns*', Zafar Khan very astutely discusses Pakistan's stance regarding Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and explores the possible policy options available to Pakistan. In identifying the dark areas of the NPT, he brings forth realistic interpretations of the ground realities, while introducing the theoretical underpinnings in his framework of analysis. His detailed analysis of the implications of the Indo-US nuclear deal, the Indian stance on FMCT and NPT, the arms race in the region and Iran's nuclear programme showcase Pakistan's concerns on the issue.

Syed Waqas Haider Bukhari, in his article, '*The Role of China in Economic Stabilization and Reconstruction of Afghanistan*', highlights the rapidly increasing interests of China in improving the politico-economic ties with Afghanistan and in the stability and security of the region. The writer further discusses the ongoing Chinese efforts in this regard, while taking full cognizance of the multiple apprehensions of China regarding USA's China Containment Policy, its own Xinjiang province and overall security of the region.

Brigadier Mumtaz Zia Saleem presents a very interesting analysis on the '*Possibility of Attack on Iranian Nuclear Sites*'. He is of the view that given the security scenario in the regions, marked by a steady military

build-up, it will be more feasible for the nations involved to maintain status quo, instead of going for military adventurism.

In the article, '*ISAF, Afghanistan and Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities*', Dr. Raja Muhammad Khan gives insightful comments on the Post-Afghan Drawdown scenario confronting all the stakeholders in the region, especially ISAF and Pakistan. The article emphasizes on the need to develop a consensus-based, all-inclusive framework for Afghanistan, standing firm on the mutually agreed upon principle of sovereign equality, a commonly shared resolve for sustainable peace and stability and at the same time realistic goal-setting.

Another intuitive analysis comes in the form of an article, '*Eurasian Geopolitics and Emerging Trends of Naval Aviation in Indian Ocean*', by Shehzad Masood Roomi. The writer presents focused arguments on the US, Chinese and Indian maritime strategies in the Eurasian region and their possible fallout on Pakistan, while discussing the latest trends in naval warfare.

Dr. Tughral Yamin's article, '*How Pakistan Negotiates With the United States of America?*', is an important piece of writing. The writer has picked up various pieces of thread to untangle the web of intricacies involved in the bitter-sweet relations that Pakistan and the US have historically enjoyed. The article recommends that both the countries should desire a mutually agreed upon roadmap to strengthen the evolving ties between the two countries. There may be failures and lapses on the part of both states, but now the time has come to bury the past and start a new.

\_\_\_\_\_**The Editor**

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

*Zafar Khan*

***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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> 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."<sup>4</sup> On the



6<sup>th</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup> 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 17<sup>th</sup> 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."<sup>7</sup>

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).<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

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.<sup>10</sup> 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)<sup>11</sup>, 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.<sup>12</sup>

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.<sup>13</sup> 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."<sup>14</sup>

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."<sup>15</sup> 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.”<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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.”<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> 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.<sup>22</sup> 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"<sup>23</sup> 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."<sup>24</sup> 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.'<sup>25</sup> 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."<sup>26</sup>

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.<sup>27</sup> 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”<sup>28</sup> 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).<sup>29</sup>

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.<sup>30</sup> 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.<sup>31</sup> 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.<sup>32</sup> 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.<sup>33</sup>

It is interesting to note that both India and Pakistan's deterrence capability is in a *formative phase*<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>35</sup> 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*.<sup>36</sup>

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.<sup>37</sup> 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."<sup>38</sup>

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]."<sup>39</sup> 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."<sup>40</sup> 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"<sup>41</sup> 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.<sup>42</sup> 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."<sup>43</sup> 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.<sup>44</sup> Despite Obama's ambitious Prague speech in April 2009, bolstered by the former US secretaries' pieces,<sup>45</sup> 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.<sup>46</sup> 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.<sup>47</sup>

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."<sup>48</sup> 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.<sup>49</sup> 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,<sup>50</sup> 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."<sup>51</sup>

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

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- 2 The former Director General of International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEA) Mohammad ElBaradei stated that, "The NPT contains a triangle linkage: verified nuclear non-proliferation; cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and nuclear disarmament. Without this linkage, there would have been no agreement on the NPT in 1968." See for example, 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).
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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.
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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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- 15 See the NPT article I, "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," IAEA (22 April 1970), available at: <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Infcircs/Others/infcirc140.pdf> (accessed on May 14, 2012).
- 16 See the NPT article II Ibid.
- 17 Many in Pakistan accuse the US of violating not only the NPT but also UN Security Council Resolution 1172, which was adopted after the South Asian nuclear adversary tested nuclear weapons in May 1998, to deter them for carrying out more tests. See, Bast, "Pakistan's Nuclear Calculus," p.79.
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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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- 26 See for example, James M. Acton, “Bombs Away? Being Realistic about Deep Nuclear Reductions,” *The Washington Quarterly*, 35(2), (Spring 2012), p.38.
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- 49 Michael Krepon, "The Limits of Influence," *The Non-Proliferation Treaty*, 18(1), (2011), p.86.

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- 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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## THE ROLE OF CHINA IN ECONOMIC STABILIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF AFGHANISTAN

*Syed Waqas Haider Bukhari*

### ***Abstract***

*China, most populous and rapidly growing industrial country of the world, has shown its strong political, economical and security-based interests in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is rich in terms of natural reserves. China is trying to gain access to these natural resources like Aynak copper and oil reserves, providing economic aid and thus improving political relations. Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is playing a part in addressing security problems of Afghanistan and China is observer while Afghanistan is a member of SAARC. On the other hand, Afghan government is appreciating and taking this greater role in a positive sense because it is bringing modesty in their relations from bilateral partnership to strategic partnership.*

### **Introduction**

The Rise of China is presenting a new international framework of supremacy. China is rising peacefully but there are certain questions as to how it will govern the world or overcome its socio-economic, political, security challenges, etc. There is a view that China would control these problems as Europe controlled many of its problems during and after renaissance as it did for industrial revolution.

Presently, China is a permanent member of UN Security Council. Its growth rate remained 10% annually for 30 years. In 2007, China lead Germany as world's third biggest economic power while in 2009, it overtook Japan and now it is the world's second biggest economy, United States being the first.<sup>1</sup> In 2005, a Washington based think-tank, Earth Policy Institute, claimed that China was the biggest consumer in several fields. In 2006, WTO said that China is the second biggest exporter of the world.<sup>2</sup> This rapid development of

China is disturbing the Western powers because they are unable to control the growth of China.

China has more than 1.3 billion people<sup>3</sup> with its population growth rate being 0.493 per cent annually.<sup>4</sup> In present days, China has achieved a better growth rate. Due to rapid development of industry and modernization programme, its energy demands are increasing tremendously and it makes 17 per cent of the entire demand of the world. As IAEA predicts, in 2020 China's total energy demands will be 44 per cent.<sup>5</sup> In terms of industry, China is a very strong country. Its share in global industrial production was 2.2 per cent in 1999 which increased to 6.6 % in 2002. Chinese imports are increasing with an annual average of 15 per cent from 1979, which shows that China is the third largest importer after Germany and United States.<sup>6</sup> In 2005, according to China's International Chamber of Commerce, 23 per cent of Chinese companies are ready to increase their investment abroad. In 2000, China's foreign investment reserves were \$7.6 billion which increased in 2005 and reached to \$57.2 billion.<sup>7</sup>

On domestic level, quality and allocation of resources do not fulfil required demand. China has oil and coal in north and northwestern areas, and has hydro-electric reserves in south and southwest areas. At present, China is developing industrially and this massive industrial development is demanding a vast quantity of raw material. Along with this, China is facing a difference between demand and supply. Therefore, China's reserves are not fulfilling the demand of this fast industrial development. On the other hand, unlike other countries, China is utilizing energy on large scale. More than 75 per cent of China's energy consumption, primarily, relies upon coal, which is increasing environmental problems.<sup>8</sup>

Current rising energy demand of China is likely to disturb geopolitics. In 2004, when China's fast growing energy needs increased, it came under the study of international politics because these demands were creating serious concerns for all states. China's basic energy delivery of electricity and coal was doubled and coal production was raised

by 50 per cent from 1980 to 2000. China's energy use was increased by 15 per cent within a year and use of coal reached 14.4 per cent, in 2004. There are several causes of China's fast growing energy uses like: rapid growing population and economy, fast growing industry, quickly growing modernization and trade. In 2001, China's economy grew four times and its energy output increased by two times. This huge development surprised industrialized countries of the world. Its use of energy sprang up more rapidly than its GDP. This rapid progress shocked not only China but also the world, because this thing had very substantial impact on world's market of energy.<sup>9</sup>

China's speedy economic development increased due to its reliance on other countries for the vast variety of reserves. In 2006, China was second in terms of energy consumers and then in 2004 it left Japan behind in terms of oil import.<sup>10</sup> China is on top in terms of coal consumption, although China has more than 33 per cent of world's coal deposits but due to growing economy and increasing population, its domestic reserves are not meeting its requirement and in future it is expected that the demand of coal along with other energy sources will also increase.<sup>11</sup> China's fast economic growth, along with high level of trade, modernization, rapid growing industry, technological advancement and high foreign reserves, are the causes of its high level of energy consumption.

In current international environment, it seems that the epicentre of international economics or economic system is shifting from the West to Asia due to rise of China. This rise of China has become a major concern for the West. Though they are dealing with the rise of China, yet they do not fully understand its real impacts. In prevailing Asian context, especially after September 2001, when United States entered Afghanistan with some new strategies, China's role was not insignificant. In reality, there are numerous horizons where interests of both China and Afghanistan are same and where they might find new cooperative opportunities.<sup>12</sup> Both China and Afghanistan have common borders and political relations between them have remained well. China also resisted any foreign intervention in Afghanistan during



Cold War era. At the time of Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, China supported United States and other allies against Soviet Union. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, China stopped supporting them. After the decline of Soviet-sponsored government of Afghanistan, Taliban came into the helm of Afghanistan's affairs and like many other countries, China also did not favour this regime and clogged all official relations and closed its embassy in Kabul. After the decline of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001, China redeveloped official political relations with the newly-elected government of Hamid Karzai. Since then, China is developing its business relations with Afghanistan in an attempt to secure its commercial interests.<sup>13</sup>

Presently China is not as actively involved in Afghanistan as United States and its allies are, but it is securing its interests, avoiding the possible conflict with the West. China wants to develop a strong relationship with Afghanistan, having no concern with any form of government. West claims that China is gaining benefits at the expense of US and its allies and calls it a free-rider. On the other hand, China denies it because China's interests are different. USA and its allies are combating against Al-Qaeda for a peaceful Afghanistan while China has no such concern except for stability. China has a broader perspective because whoever wins power will necessarily need foreign investment and this will provide leverage to China.<sup>14</sup>

In Afghanistan, China is increasing its soft image which shows that Chinese interests are different from the West. United States and its allies plan to eliminate Taliban and form a government which would secure their interests in a better way. On the other hand, China is working on humanitarian basis and is participating in the reconstruction of conflict-ridden country.

### **China's Post-9/11 Foreign Policy towards Afghanistan**

China's foreign policy is based on five principles of peaceful co-existence which stresses on 'non-intervention', respect of the sovereignty and physical boundaries of other countries, at the same

time 'non-interference' in the domestic affairs of other countries. Similarly, China's policy towards Afghanistan is also based on the same principle of non-intervention. Currently, there are certain indications as to China's policy towards Afghanistan. In prevailing international environment, epicentre of China's foreign policy is to secure its business interests in Afghanistan which cannot be achieved without the support of international community.<sup>15</sup> After September 2001 terrorist attacks, when United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan, China was one of those countries which developed official political relations with new Afghan government. In February 2002, China reopened its embassy in Kabul and provided 5 million dollars aid to Afghanistan, on emergency basis. Initially in its policy, China showed leverage towards Afghanistan. China also made different promises for reconstruction and diplomatic help which also included China's presence in Kabul Declaration. China also agreed to respect Afghanistan's sovereignty and its borders. China also promised to carry on peace talk with Taliban and both countries signed many bilateral agreements to strengthen their relations. Both agreed to enhance their cooperation in many fields, especially in the fields of economics and technology.<sup>16</sup>

After September 2001, focal point of China's policy was to augment its presence in Afghanistan. It gave massive economic assistance and won the bid of Afghanistan's 3.5 billion dollars Aynak copper project which rendered China the biggest foreign investor.<sup>17</sup> China is also working on different other projects enhancing the economic power of Afghanistan. In current circumstances, China is busy in developing energy sector, training the people of Afghanistan in mining and cooperating in controlling drugs. In its policy, China clearly showed its support to Afghan government on different United Nations resolutions, relating to the issue of Afghanistan. China also assured strong diplomatic help and gave Afghanistan the status of an observer in SCO to curb terrorism, drug smuggling and other crimes in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, China clearly showed its support to United States global objectives. In a joint statement with president Obama, the Chinese Primer assured his country's support

in Afghanistan, in order to counter terrorism and to sustain internal stability to gain sustainable social and economic growth.<sup>18</sup>

China needs to take straight and strong measures to stabilize Afghanistan, preventing it from becoming a serious threat to its internal security. At present, many Chinese companies are running diverse projects in Afghanistan. China, in its foreign policy, is improving its relations with the government of Afghanistan by providing it with aid. Chinese companies, in the advent of improved political relations with the government of Afghanistan, would work in a better way. Thus, trade between both countries would augment and China would easily have access to the natural resources of Afghanistan.

### **China's Role in the Post-9/11 redevelopment of Afghanistan**

In post-9/11 scenario China played a constructive role in the redevelopment process of Afghanistan. It supported the international community to overcome the problems of Afghanistan. After the removal of Taliban government and intervention of allies in the helm of Afghanistan, China supported the efforts of international community. It stood by the international community for the redevelopment of Afghanistan. China's role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan can be analyzed as follows:-

#### **➤ China's Political Engagement with Afghanistan**

- Since long, China and Afghanistan are enjoying good relations. After the independence of PRC, Afghanistan was among the first ones to recognize China. Initially China did not focus on developing diplomatic relations with Afghanistan. Official diplomatic relations between China and Afghanistan were established in January 1955 and both countries exchanged their ambassadors. Later on, China granted loans to Afghanistan on different occasions and to make their relations stronger, both countries signed many treaties. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations,

China showed a little presence in Afghanistan until Taliban emerged at the helm of affairs in Afghanistan in 1996.<sup>19</sup> After the incident of 9/11, China reestablished its frozen relations with newly elected government of Hamid Karzai. In December 2002, both countries signed 'Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations'. Under this agreement, China has to respect territorial sovereignty of Afghanistan as well as it would support peace process of Afghanistan and will provide assistance in its reconstruction. In coming years, bilateral political relations were not so deep, therefore, high officials of both countries made short visits. In the same period, Chinese aid towards Afghanistan remained limited till 2007.<sup>20</sup> In 2007-08 China's export to Afghanistan was below 50 million dollars.

- In 2006, both countries signed the 'treaty of bilateral friendship and cooperation' during the visit of President Karzai to China. In 2008, China showed deep interest in Afghanistan when the Afghan government allowed foreign investors.<sup>21</sup> In March 2010, during Afghan President Hamid Karzai's visit, both countries signed three different agreements. In these agreements, economic and technical cooperation was improved. Duty free access to some Afghani goods and larger cooperation in irrigation, mining, agriculture, infrastructure development and hydroelectric fields was also proposed. Thus, both countries increased cooperation in natural deposits, road development, agriculture and electricity.<sup>22</sup>
- When China's interest in Afghanistan depleted, political officials of both countries exchanged frequent visits. Political leaders of both countries met many times at different forums, and China joined different organizations for peaceful solution of Afghanistan issue.

- In response to China's deep interest in developing good political relations, Afghanistan's leadership showed their political interests. Presently, many Chinese companies are busy in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Chinese policymakers understand that when political relations will improve, their companies would work in a better way.

➤ **China's Economic Role in Afghanistan**

- Afghanistan is an extremely under-developed country with extreme poverty, unemployment and poor infrastructure. Presently, more than 90 per cent of Afghan budget is based on foreign aid. In 2001, after the formation of political government in Afghanistan, China emerged as a major player in the redevelopment of war-torn country. Initially in January 2002, China promised to give the aid of \$150 million for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.<sup>23</sup> In the beginning, China gave economic assistance to Afghanistan on different projects which include 10 million dollars for Parwan Irrigation Project and for a hospital in Kabul. Moreover, China gave human resource training to more than 800 different officials of Afghanistan and also gave technical training to local Afghans in different departments. In 2003, China gave the grant of \$15 million after signing Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement.<sup>24</sup> Later on, China emerged as a vital economic player in Afghanistan. Then in 2009, it provided 75 million dollars as economic aid.<sup>25</sup> From 2002 to 2010, China gave economic assistance of 205.3 million dollars, and 19.5 million dollars as loan to Afghanistan. In 2011, China gave free aid of 23.7 million dollars to Afghanistan<sup>26</sup>.
- Despite all this economic assistance and mutual trade agreements, Sino-Afghan economic committee identified many new areas of cooperation like: agriculture, infrastructure building, hydroelectricity and natural reserves.<sup>27</sup> Both

countries are also doing fine in bilateral business. Chinese telecommunication companies, Huawei and ZTE, updated 200,000 Afghanistan's analog telephone lines to digital.<sup>28</sup>

- Afghanistan has the largest unexplored reserves of copper, coal, iron, gas, cobalt, mercury, gold, lithium and thorium, estimated to more than 1 trillion dollars. The sites of these deposits are now open for international investors. After the opening of these sites, China showed its interests in these reserves. In prevailing international environment, China has largest economy of the world while Afghanistan needs this economy badly. China's industry is excelling amongst world's industries and in order to maintain its smooth growth, China needs massive natural reserves. Its domestic resources are insufficient to fulfil the demand of its growing industry, so in order to meet this demand China is improving its role in Afghanistan. China is interested in the stability of Afghanistan because it has economic interests behind all this and wants favourable environment for its companies which are working in Afghanistan and sending natural resources back to China.

- **Aynak Copper**

- The tender of world's largest and most notable untapped reserves of Aynak Copper was won by China Metallurgical Corporation (MCC). This is the biggest foreign investment in the history of Afghanistan and if it is explored properly, it would generate the revenue bigger than all the projects of Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> Statistically, this project has reserves of more than 88 billion dollars which is double of Afghanistan's GDP. In 2007, when President Karzai welcomed foreign investors for investment in natural resource sector of Afghanistan, China's MCC won

the tender of Aynak Copper project in 3.5 billion dollars for the period of 30 years and the investment of this project presents biggest direct foreign investment throughout Afghanistan's history. In cost and benefit analysis, the total amount of this project presents 20 per cent of all foreign direct investment in Afghanistan since 2001, and income from this project will give 45 per cent of Afghanistan's total national budget just from this single project. Along with this project, China promised to build 400 megawatt power plant to support the operation in mine, along with the water development and sanitization plant for common people. To fulfil the demand of electricity for mining, MCC will tunnel a new coal mine for their generators. In addition to this, company will construct a plant for the refinement of copper ore and a rail track to carry coal to plant and bring copper to China. According to the terms of the project, MCC will construct roads, mosques and schools in Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> This mine project will generate 4,000 jobs for local people and generate more than 11 million tons of copper in the next 25 years.<sup>31</sup> In 2010, MCC signed another agreement regarding Aynak project that if possible, it will construct railway track, from north of Pakistan, via Aynak and Kabul, to south of Uzbekistan.<sup>32</sup> Success of this project will increase further Chinese investments in Afghanistan. Chinese companies will find some leverage in comparison with other companies.

- In this project, China is recruiting local people and indirectly through this recruitment, it is improving the structure of war-ton society. Like MCC, in all other projects which China has in Afghanistan, it is following the strategy of giving jobs to local people.

It is because China wants to prevent them from getting involved in any unlawful activity. When these people will have their jobs, Afghanistan will become stable and it will serve China in a better way.

○ **Trade Relations**

- In 21<sup>st</sup> century, China emerged as the biggest trading partner of Afghanistan, and in its first nine years, bilateral trade between the two countries reached \$250 million from \$25 million. This was considered to be a very strong trade development yet it was mediocre and unilateral. Majority of official trade comprised of Chinese electrical products.<sup>33</sup>
- In 2006, ‘Sino-Afghan Economic Committee’, for increasing bilateral trade, was set up and it gave duty free access to about 278 goods. Later on in 2010, both countries signed ‘Comprehensive Cooperative Partnership Agreement’, to boost their economic trade. This agreement promised larger economic and technological cooperation, giving a favourable tariff to many products of Afghanistan.<sup>34</sup> In 2012, China promised to give 23.8 million dollars to increase investment and bilateral trade.

Along with the increase in bilateral trade and resource exploration, both countries would focus in the fields of agriculture, engineering and the growth of infrastructure.<sup>35</sup> Afghanistan’s government is interested in enhancing bilateral trade with China, importing technological items. It is expected that this would boost up after the stabilization of Afghanistan.



**Trade between Afghanistan and China, 1999-2009**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Chinese Export to Afghanistan (USD Millions)</b>	<b>Chinese Import from Afghanistan (USD Millions)</b>	<b>Total Value of Trade (USD Millions)</b>
1999	16.68	2.90	19.58
2000	19.89	5.40	25.29
2002	19.92	0.08	19.99
2003	26.45	0.61	27.06
2004	56.97	0.95	57.92
2005	51.21	1.56	52.77
2006	100.47	0.19	100.66
2007	169.00	2.00	171.00
2008	152	3	155
2009	215	1	216

Source: Steven A. Zyck, “The Role of China in Afghanistan’s Economic Development and Reconstruction”, *Civil Military Focus Centre*, (March 2012), p.3.

From 1999 to 2009, trade between China and Afghanistan reached \$216 million from \$19.58 million, which makes China the biggest trading partner of Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup> While in 2011, bilateral trade was estimated to be about \$234 million, Afghanistan’s export being just \$4.4 million.<sup>37</sup> In such a short period, this was considerably a huge improvement. But, it remains minimal, being only one sided. China’s export consists of cheap electronic items.<sup>38</sup>

China sees Afghanistan as a gigantic trading partner. Its work is supporting allies and boosting up the wrecked economy of Afghanistan. China’s efforts in Afghanistan are improving living standard of people and attempting to cease elongated war. China is investing profusely on the infrastructure which would strengthen its basis. This large scale investment is a major factor in bringing peace and stability to the future of Afghanistan.<sup>39</sup>

China is focusing on economic interests in the name of political relations. Through investment China is paving its way to political support in order to evolve more companies. Here, China has economic interests, competing with other players in Afghanistan, and it holds leverage over other players because of its historic soft image and five principles of peaceful coexistence.

### **China's Security Concerns in Afghanistan**

In contrast with other neighbouring countries, China has border with Afghanistan and it remained less involved in internal affairs of Afghanistan. China shares about 100-km long border with Afghanistan. China has no ethnic community in Afghanistan and it did not interfere in the political affairs of Afghanistan.<sup>40</sup>

After the withdrawal of Soviet forces, an unending conflict emerged in Afghanistan which disturbed not only Afghanistan itself but also its surrounding areas. This unending war and instability in Afghanistan disturbed China's Western Xinjiang province. Since then, China's policy is greatly concerned with the security and stability of Xinjiang region. In broader view Afghanistan is a major external factor which disturbed not only Xinjiang but also overall security environment of Central and South Asia. The emergence of Taliban's government in Afghanistan provided favourable environment to those who disturb China, through Xinjiang. Consequently, some fresh challenges like — smuggling, drug trafficking, narcotics and terrorism — confronted China. After the invasion of United States in 2001, the intensity of these threats increased, which disturbed overall security environment of the region.<sup>41</sup>

Recently, the presidents of both countries, in a joint statement, declared to cooperate with each other in intelligence sharing against the terrorists. China gave the grant of 23 million dollars for taking necessary measures for the situation which would emerge after the departure of Western troops after 2014. China does not want

Afghanistan to be under the control of Taliban because it thinks that they shelter East Turkestan Islamic Movement which is led by Uighurs, those who want independence of Xinjiang.

China has no military presence in Afghanistan because China's policymakers have a view that this would turn terrorists against China and it may disturb China greatly. On the other hand, United States is convincing China to open Wakhan Corridor for trade. But, China is unwilling to open this corridor for US supplies. It has two reasons: Firstly, this corridor consists of mountains and it is, therefore, impenetrable in winter due to heavy snow fall. Secondly, China does not want to become a part of any Western alliance because it is much cautious about its Xinjiang security situation. There is no sympathy for Taliban in China's foreign policy, but China never condemns anyone specifically, following a low key approach. China's careful approach towards Afghanistan is based upon China's foreign policy's five principles of peaceful coexistence. China has a view that Taliban cannot be eliminated by military forces because they hold a strong political force at the helm of Afghanistan's politics.<sup>42</sup>

There is no bad experience between China and Afghanistan and no political or social group in Afghanistan opposes China. Policymakers of China are worried about the long-term presence of NATO in the neighbourhood of China which poses security threat to China, while on other hand China is not in favour of immediate withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan because it would put in danger many Chinese business and security interests. In geopolitical point of view, presence of NATO in Afghanistan and Central Asia is mounting competition among great powers in the region. This is unfavourable for China, not only politically but security-wise also.

### **China and Afghanistan's Oil and Gas Cooperation**

Currently, China's most vital investment in natural resource sector is in Amu Darya oil field in north of Afghanistan. It makes

China biggest investor in Afghanistan's history. In December 2011, China National Petroleum Corporation won the tender to drill three oilfields for the period of next 25 years at Amu Darya River Basin.<sup>43</sup> Under the conditions of the agreement, in the start, CNPC will invest approximately 400 million dollars in the exploration of oil and it may generate the revenue of \$7 billion, for this conflict ridden country.<sup>44</sup>

According to the terms of agreement, China will pay Afghanistan 20% tax on income and 15% royalty and 70% of revenue on income. It is estimated that during the period of 25 years, Afghan government should take \$7 billion. CNPC's actual work on oil exploration will be for 23 years, and 2 years will be consumed on instalment of the project. This project will give annually \$304.35 million to Afghan government. According to a survey, these oilfields have reserves of more than 87 million barrels, and Afghan government is considering this tender to be a test for larger oil reserves in upcoming years.<sup>45</sup>

Exploration of oil is giving another platform to China to enlarge its footprint in Afghanistan. Furthermore, by giving jobs to local people in these oilfields, China will help political government of Afghanistan in ensuring peace and stability. By exploration of oil, China can further improve its economic ties with Afghanistan and to some extent can meet the increasing thrust of its rapid growing industry. On the other hand, these reserves of oil will give biggest revenue to Afghan government and it would be better able to improve the condition of this war-torn society.

### **China and Afghanistan: Strategic Partnership**

Afghanistan has concluded many strategic partnership agreements with Britain, India and United States regarding insurance of loss after the departure of NATO at the end of 2014. In the series of these agreements, president of Afghanistan met their counterpart in China to upgrade their everlasting friendly relations to the level of strategic partnership. This partnership would cover broader perspective including security, economy and culture.<sup>46</sup>

For developing strategic partnership and communication on important matters, both sides are strengthening their political relations, enhancing mutual trust and increasing direct communication between high officials. This development of relations between two countries is opening new horizons for advancing their strategic cooperation which not only will serve the primary interests of both countries but it will also bring peace and stability and ensure the development in the region. In the light of their strategic cooperation, both sides are increasing their cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, agriculture, infrastructure, resource management, energy and other projects. Similarly, China is showing its willingness to assist Afghanistan in the field of education, culture, telecommunication and broadcasting. It is also providing training to Afghans in different fields. In order to counter three forces of evil -- terrorism, extremism and separatism -- both countries are enhancing their security cooperation. While under the umbrella of SCO and SAARC, both are enhancing their cooperation and mutual coordination for regional integration. For peace and stability, China is participating in different regional and international forums regarding Afghanistan, respecting the will of local people. In addition to it, China is working with international community for the development of peace and stability in the region. On the other hand, China is adopting friendly policies towards Afghanistan, giving altruistic assistance. This up-gradation of relations, from bilateral to strategic partnership, is providing a platform to both countries to enhance their relations in multilateral fields.

### **Response of Afghan Government on China's Role**

In response to China's interests, the Afghan government thanked the political government of China for supporting Afghanistan in becoming an observer in SCO. Afghan president welcomed China's initiative to deepen mutual relations and thanked it for its support and assistance in the reconstruction and reconciliation efforts. The Afghan president showed his willingness in developing long-lasting friendly relations and appreciated the advancement in bilateral relations and bilateral strategic and cooperative partnership. Afghanistan welcomed

different Chinese companies to enhance their role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and it further hoped to establish better political, economic, trade and energy cooperation with China.<sup>47</sup>

President Karzai has publically recognized the economic success of China in Afghanistan. In his meetings with Chinese officials during many of his visits to China, he wished for strong cooperation between China and Afghanistan. His desire for developing strong relations with China is rooted in its (China) economic rise and its economic support to Afghanistan which is providing bases for the generation of greater economic revenue. China's economic support is necessary not only to boost Afghanistan's already wrecked economy but also to reduce its dependence on Western aid. On the other hand, President Karzai is in the favour of larger cooperation of SCO in Afghanistan in different fields.<sup>48</sup>

On 14 November 2007, during a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, Karzai said that Afghanistan appreciates its customary friendship with China and is arrogant of being friends with it. He thanked and appreciated Chinese support and assistance for bringing peace as well as economic support in reconstruction process. Moreover, the president hoped that bilateral cooperation would increase in future which would create favourable conditions for trade and economic cooperation. This relationship would increase cooperation in countering terrorism as well as increasing communication and coordination in international issues.

After signing of trade agreement between presidents of both countries on 24 March 2010, President Karzai said that China is playing a vital role for peace and stability in Afghanistan and also in the region. He further said that it is an honour for Afghanistan to have a friend like China. Karzai also said that "Afghanistan is willing to cooperate with China and other countries in the region in advancing peace and stability."<sup>49</sup>

## **Conclusion**

In sum, after 9/11 when US and its allies attacked Afghanistan, China made no military involvement, giving preference to economic role and developing good relations with new government. After analysis, it seems that three factors are explaining the possible reasons of China's economic role in Afghanistan. Firstly, China has a fear that US is containing it and intervention in Afghanistan is one aspect of its strategy. Secondly, China is geo-economically involved in Afghanistan to secure its Xinjiang province and to prevent it from becoming a base of terrorists, because this area is very important for China. Thirdly, China is adopting the policy of harmonious world and according to this policy, China wants peace in the world and especially in the neighbourhood. Afghanistan is very important for China, not only from security point of view but also in terms of natural resources. China is growing rapidly and is looking for natural resources in other countries. China's major purpose of increasing role in Afghanistan is to bring peace and stability there as it is facing the threat of extremism from Afghanistan. On the other hand, China wishes to gain commercial interests because Afghanistan is rich in resources. China, being the neighbouring country and having geographical advantage, is playing beneficial role in Afghanistan. Government of Afghanistan is also in favour of China.

China is giving aid to Afghanistan on humanitarian basis. It is taking part in the reconstruction of war-torn country. Along with this, SCO is supporting Afghanistan by eliminating illegal smuggling and threat of terrorism on borders. Along with SCO, forum of SAARC is also giving an opportunity, to both China and Afghanistan, for a better understanding of each other. Through the forum of SAARC, they can discuss their matters in a better way.

In different fields, China and United States have conflict of ideas but in many fields they are cooperating in Afghanistan. China has an advantage in contrast with US that it has good relations with Taliban. So, they are not a big threat to China. It seems that China is playing

a constructive role in Afghanistan because it is defining its image as a responsible rising power.

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## **POSSIBILITY OF ATTACK ON IRANIAN NUCLEAR SITES**

*Brigadier Mumtaz Zia Saleem*

### ***Abstract***

*Iran's nuclear programme has numerous regional and global implications. It has become an irritating point for the world in general and west in particular. That's why the dangers of physical attack on Iranian nuclear facilities are looming in the region. A report by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) puts Iran's nuclear programme in sharp focus. The report indicates that now Iran's nuclear programme is in the advanced stage and it has built a large containment vessel. On this premise, this paper is an endeavour to comprehend the implications of Iran's nuclear programme and to investigate the possibilities as well as implications of physical attacks on these nuclear facilities.*

### **Introduction**

The dangers of physical attack on Iranian nuclear facilities are looming in the region. The report by Director General International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released on 8 November 2011 has put Iran's nuclear programme in sharp focus<sup>1</sup>. The report indicates that Iran has its nuclear programme now in the advanced stage and has built a large containment vessel at its Parchin base that is used to test trigger mechanism for the nuclear device. Parchin, an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) military base (60 square kilometres) is located 30 kilometres south of Tehran. Recently, there was a massive explosion at the site on 13 November 2011 killing an officer of IRGC and 20 others. General David H Petraeus, former Commander Central Command (CENTCOM), while giving interview on CNN TV channel on 10 January 2010 admitted that though Iranian nuclear facilities were heavily

fortified, “Well, they certainly can be bombed”<sup>2</sup>. He repeated the same on 16 March 2010, “In all of these initiatives, our military activities will continue to support our diplomatic efforts, and we will remain vigilant across a wide range of contingencies.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Global and Regional Implications of Iran’s Nuclear Programme**

The idea of nuclear Iran has sent ripples across the region and the globe. While the United States and its allies consider nuclear-armed Tehran as unthinkable, it is believed that acquisition of nuclear capability for Iran is now a matter of time. Iranian leadership has claimed that Iran has already attained the status of a nuclear state. Iran’s insistence that it acquired its nuclear capabilities legally under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) would encourage other aspirants (Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Algeria etc) to develop nuclear options of their own. But this claim suffered a heavy dent after surfacing of secret nuclear enrichment at Natanz and Arak. Such efforts would undermine nuclear non-proliferation restraints internationally. The nuclear cooperation with United Arab Emirates (UAE) and nuclear agreement with India by United States has made the case against Iran weak. Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Ali Hosseini told the United Nations Panel on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that Indo-United States nuclear deal has severely damaged the NPT<sup>4</sup>. A nuclear-ready Iran could be emboldened to manipulate oil prices upward. This might happen due to perceived Iranian threat to the freedom of the seas (threats to oil transit points or Straits of Hormuz) or threats of terrorist proxies against Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States oil facilities and pipelines. According to the United States, emboldened by its nuclear capability, Iran might lend greater support to terrorists for targeting Israel and United States’ interests in the region or across the globe. This would enhance Iranian role in all matters relating to the Persian Gulf and related regions; something which will be resisted strongly by Arab states. Whether a nuclear-ready Iran will act rationally and respond positively to global concerns is anybody’s guess. But the will and determination shown by Iran on its issues with United States and Israel are known and have made

the question of nuclear deterrence extremely viable. Iran believes that United States acted in bias to provide civil nuclear technology to India. Iran is apprehensive of this collusion that may be aimed at containing Iran in long run.

The nuclear programme is believed to focus on production of Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) and Plutonium. In November 2004, Tehran signed a temporary agreement with Germany, France and Britain to cease uranium enrichment voluntarily and for a limited period. Later, in August 2005, Iran removed United Nations seals and re-initiated the enrichment process in Natanz. IAEA Board of Governors passed a resolution regarding reporting of Iran's nuclear case to United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This proposal of swap-over of fissile material for enriched uranium, possibly to France or Russia, is still under consideration. UNSC vide UN Resolution 1696 on 31 July 2006 gave Iran 30 days to abandon enrichment activity and comply with IAEA demands. Later, the sanctions were imposed through UN Resolution 1737 on 23 December 2006, which were intensified through another UN Resolution 1747 on 24 March 2007. However, United States is still pushing for tougher sanctions against Iran and on 28 January 2010; imposed stiff sanctions on its own, after frustration from international community to do so through the mechanism of United Nations. This time it has targeted two Iranian military groups and a number of Iranian banks and people it accuses of backing nuclear proliferation and terror-related activities. United States National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) reported on 27 November 2007 that contrary to Bush administration, assertions, Iran halted its nuclear weapons programme in 2003.<sup>5</sup> This was interesting, as earlier in NIE 2005, it was reported that Iran is determined to develop nuclear weapons despite international pressures and obligations. The credibility of United States intelligence has become questionable as well, because in the past also they reported presence of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) in Iraq, on the basis of which United States attacked Iraq. (Some critics view the process of United States intelligence as highly politicized and express dismay over how to build up a case for United States' policy options on various issues and for seeking legitimacy for attack). NIE

2007 indicates a timeframe of weapon enrichment by Iran sometime in between 2010-2015. United States intelligence estimates suggest that Iran has about 1,000 kilograms of low-yield uranium. National Intelligence Estimates 2007 has also reported some technical difficulties faced by Iran regarding calibration of centrifuges and acquiring a precision rotational speed as the enrichment process proceeds. Iran has adopted an off and on nuclear build-up strategy. It had postponed its uranium enrichment process after signing the Additional Protocol with the IAEA in October 2003. Under United States and European pressure, Iran suspended its uranium enrichment process on 22 November 2004. Iran stands firm on its stance of enriching uranium on its own soil and has warned United States of serious consequences in case punitive measures are taken. Iran has announced successful enrichment of uranium at the Natanz plant, calling it an “historic achievement.” On 11 April, President Ahmadinejad announced uranium enrichment up to 3.5% (90% enrichment is required for nuclear bomb). Iran has begun enrichment of uranium in a second network of centrifuges, thus doubling its enrichment capacity.

For more than a decade, American officials in Congress and successive administrations have tried to focus on what they perceive as the threat of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. The United States has asked China, Russia and others to cut off supply of vital technology, material and know-how to Iran. This supply-side non-proliferation strategy has achieved some successes. It still could slow Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapon capabilities. Thus the West believes that the supply-side constriction should continue. However, West is divided over the way Iran should be confronted on its nuclear issue and lack consensus in order to enthusiastically put up a joint front. This is evident from the fact that countries like China, Russia and Germany continue to maintain commercial and defence cooperation alongside their demand not to pursue nuclear weapons programme/United Nations sanctions. Reportedly, German firms continue to remain active in Iran and business is still going pretty well, irrespective of the calls by the government for tougher sanctions. Daimler-Benz, BASF and oil companies are active in

Iran even today<sup>6</sup>. Russian cooperation in Bushehr Plant and sale of S-300 air defence missile to Iran is still intact. China continues to import 12% of its total oil requirement from Iran (2009-2010)<sup>7</sup>. The West, led by United States, continues to make lofty claims and demonstrates greater unity amongst them. German Foreign Minister Westerwelle has expressed on 14 November 2011 that “the international community wanted to continue dialogue with Tehran, but would not put up with stalling tactics any longer. Further sanctions could not be ruled out if Iran maintained its refusal to cooperate”<sup>8</sup>. On 4 March 2010, United States and its allies proposed imposition of new sanctions on Iran in United Nations Security Council session. The session remained inconclusive and on 14 March 2010 French and Finnish Foreign Ministers announced that European Union is ready to take unilateral measures against Iran, seemingly in a bid to revive the solidarity amongst the West. Notwithstanding its failure in achieving convincing support in UNSC, such statements especially from the United States are meant to pacify Israel, which remains anxious about Iran’s nuclear ambition. Therefore, consensus is likely to evolve on any stringent measure against Iran, owing to the Chinese reluctance for imposition of sanctions at this point of time. United States continues to prefer a tougher resolution and declined a European-backed draft resolution terming it too weak. Western concerns are that Iran could use the Bushehr exemption as cover for importing other prohibited goods. The United States is believed to have been working on many options, to deal with Iran’s nuclear programme. It is essential to prevent any military adventure by Israel against Iran. The second option is by doing cost-benefit analysis and choosing the best alternative instead of the worst; this means no enrichment or reprocessing of any kind. Yet there is another proposal to offer freeze for freeze<sup>9</sup> (*Iran imposes a moratorium on expansion of enrichment infrastructure and United States does not push for further Sanctions*) on Iran, that is, Iran freezes nuclear activities essentially enrichment and United States/West freeze their sanctions regime and isolation. Whatever is the incentive package, Iran is a serious contender with Israel for regional influence in the Middle East and any fair share in the security arrangement, will have little prospects of long-term success. No matter which option is adopted, the United States has realized that

without a broad-based direct engagement on the nuclear issue, seeking a common ground on the *other problems* in the region will not be possible. The role of the IAEA has not been appreciated by the United States, as its former chief Al Baradei gave some positive remarks about Iran's nuclear programme, downplaying the euphoria being created by United States/West. Even a senior Vienna diplomat familiar with the issue is quoted to have said, "There has been no increase in the number of centrifuges enriching uranium since end of May."<sup>10</sup>

United States is also capitalizing on the anti-Iran feelings in Middle East (ME) to boost its defence exports and has announced US \$43 billion arms aid package to Saudi Arabia/United Arab Emirates and others in East to bolster Middle Eastern allies mainly against Iran.<sup>11</sup> Iran's influence in the region, particularly in Iraq would increase after withdrawal of United States forces and Iraq might potentially become a de facto Iranian satellite. Perception developed by the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR) - a United States think-tank, proved to be an abortive attempt to visualize that the balance of power in the region will be tilted towards Iran in case of *Shia* dominated Iraqi National Alliance (INA) wins the 2010 elections.<sup>12</sup> United States, if it relocates its forces in Afghanistan for long duration, would be in a weaker position as its depth would be vulnerable to Iranian security forces. In the recently held election of 128-seat assembly in Lebanon in June 2009, Hezbollah<sup>13</sup> has not been able to secure more seats but has vowed to open a new page for the coming stage. The group has indicated to join in the national unity cabinet. The political marginalization of Hezbollah would affect Iran as it has been using it as leverage against United State/Israel. Lebanon has remained prone to regional conflicts but internal compromise seems possible. There are reports of United States direct negotiations with Hezbollah despite being a declared terrorist organization in the official record of Washington. How Iran would react? It will affect the tone of relationship with Hezbollah, being a political ploy in the Middle East. This could be part of a multi-pronged political-cum-diplomatic manoeuvre against Iran to reduce Iran's options against Israel/United States. Saudi Arabia is already mending fences with Syria where both states were sponsoring different camps in Lebanon. The United State

keenness to strengthen democracies and support for democratizing the Middle East did alarm many Arab regimes, but United State is not pursuing this objective for the time being. The United States offer of dialogue with Iran and extending full cooperation to Arabs has raised suspicion in both these camps. More than that the last presidential election of June 2009 sparked riots in Iran. The supporters of President Ahmadinejad and presidential candidate reformist opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi clashed resulting in deaths of many in Tehran. The most significant aspect raised during post-election protests was the questioning of the credibility/bias of the supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, something which was unusual and surprising. The aim was to attack the real power centre of Iran making the appointment of supreme leader controversial. United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also admitted that United State was behind these protests, indicating the covert operations being conducted in Iran to discredit the present government and support moderate/reformist elements from within Iran. Hillary Clinton on 9 August 2009 in an interview on CNN television said that United State was behind the scenes, “to show support for demonstrators contesting Iran’s disputed presidential election results.”<sup>14</sup> The presidential election of 2009 once again reflected the tussle between the reformists and the conservatives, as later charged the former of masterminding post-election unrest and plotting a soft coup in the Islamic republic. Twenty people were put to trial in the revolutionary court including political, figures, journalists and academics. The prosecution called for the dissolution of reformist movements such as the Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF) and the Islamic Revolution Mujahedeen Organization for lying and spreading rumours of fraud in the election.

United States is deliberately keeping the Israeli threat alive to woo Iran to come to the negotiating terms. US is benefitting enormously in the Middle East in terms of keeping the wealthy Arab monarchs under a constant Iranian threat and selling them military hardware and civil nuclear technology worth billions of dollars. By keeping the Iranian threat intact, it provides US with enormous political and economic leverage in the region; its influence waned rapidly after unhinging of



Saddam Hussein due to un-abated expansion of Iranian clout. There are reports of establishing Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Quick Reaction Force<sup>15</sup> in the backdrop of Iran's military advancements and exercises/war games. Iran, while appreciating this factor, has diffused its belligerent posture towards GCC states and is moving to improve relations. These diplomatic efforts are bearing fruit as Iran was invited to attend the GCC's 28 Summit meeting in Doha in December 2007, in the 26-year history of the GCC. The meeting was attended by six heads of states including President Ahmadinejad.<sup>16</sup> Pakistan, after seeing the Iranian response to this regional forum, has also shown interest in joining the GCC. The timings of employing the military option are important as currently it does not suit United States for being already enticed in two theatres.

### **Iranian Resolve and Pakistan's Position**

It is not just the nuclear programme itself but Iranian political leadership regards it as matter of national prestige to bolster their culture and power. Any dialogue which does not acknowledge its role as a regional player and assign it a fair share in any future regional security arrangement will have little prospects of long-term success. Pakistan should advise the Iranians to cash this offer of dialogue for economic and strategic gains. In a surprising development, President Obama did acknowledge Iran's right to nuclear technology in June 2009<sup>17</sup>. It is estimated that Iran has approximately 1200 kilograms of 3.5 per cent Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) for refining up to 20 per cent<sup>18</sup>. However, on 2 December 2009, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in a state television address said that Iran will itself enrich uranium up to 20 per cent purity.<sup>19</sup> Iran's atomic chief, Ali Akbar Salehi, revealed a new Iranian offer vis-à-vis draft nuclear plan presented by IAEA that Iran is ready to deliver 1,200 kilograms of LEU in one go in return for fuel for Tehran medical research reactor. He, however, emphasized that the exchange must take place simultaneously inside Iran<sup>20</sup>. Iran has been emphasizing on simultaneous nuclear swap inside Iran in batches which fairly addresses Western concerns over retention of LEU in Iran and is an area that can be further negotiated to prevent escalation.

## **Military Developments and its Implications**

Reportedly, numbers of powerful United States bunker-buster bombs were shipped from California to the island of Diego Garcia besides redeployment of Naval forces from the Pacific. In January 2010, the United States Administration signed a contract with Superior Maritime Services to transport 10 ammunition containers from Concord, California, to the islands, containing 195 Blu-110 and 192 Blu-117 bombs used for blasting hardened or underground structures<sup>21</sup>. These military preparations and logistics deployment for the military strike indicate urgency and seriousness. This also indicates that it had entered the execution stage and operational commanders are weighing their options and working on contingency planning. Iranian Defence Forces including the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps have conducted numerous military exercises to deter such an attack. These exercises include Air Defence drill, actual testing of air defence missiles and Radar/Early Warning (EW) systems. Dan Plesch, Director of the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy at the University of London, the co-author of a study on the United States preparations for attack on Iran, stressed, "United States bombs are ready today to destroy 10,000 targets in Iran in a few hours."<sup>22</sup> More than the United States, Israel feels directly threatened from Iran becoming nuclear and therefore, has its own plans ready to conduct pre-emptive strikes to take out nuclear sites. Israel has demonstrated hits political will clearly and has military experience of conducting such a strike in the past. Israel attacked Osirak Plant of Iraq and justified it under Article 51 of United Nations charter. It also bombed Syrian nuclear site, Al Kibar in September 2007. Israel conducted a military exercise in June 2008, involving 100 F-16/F-15 fighters along the eastern Mediterranean and over Greece. Here, the aircrafts were tasked to cover more than 900 miles (1600 kms) of distance, which is approximately the same from Israel to Natanz (Iranian Nuclear facilities) if flown over Saudi Arabia and Iraq. In this exercise the helicopter borne parties also participated to rescue the downed pilots. The reports of creation of Iran Command within Israel army have also surfaced indicating their discomfort at the manner in which the Iran nuclear issue is being handled.

If United States attacks Iran or supports such an attack and is able to occupy/position forces for it, the security of Pakistan will also be greatly threatened. The theory of “Pakistan- the Ultimate target of United States” would be seen materializing. India in the East, United States troops and unfriendly Afghans forces in the North-West and South-West and Iran, under American control in the West, would provide the ideal encirclement required to reduce the “Muslim Nuclear Power”<sup>23</sup>. Any aggression by United States against Iran will trigger massive possible *Shia* backlash within Pakistan. In case of an attack on Iran for a long time to come, we will have hostile neighbours all around, a situation which will be exploited by India. The worst case scenario will emerge, if United States attacks Iran using Pakistani soil and air space<sup>24</sup>. Pakistan has taken a clear position in this regard by not becoming part of any such adventure. Turkey, the other possible route to reach Iranian nuclear sites also has denied use of its air space for such an attack; it even did not allow territory to be used against Iraq and turned down the offer of huge aid from United States.

But the Bush administration had tried for a long time to convince the world that ultimately the Iranian nuclear standoff can be settled by attacking Iran but it is well known that it was held back due to resistance of European Union, Russia and China. There is also an in-house debate to achieve a complete consensus, especially in Israel, about the practicability of such an attack. Can the intended Iranian sites be completely reduced through a quick operation with surprise, is a question which cannot still be answered with confidence on the part of the possible or known attackers. For United States, it could be part of a psychological Warfare specially when seen in overall cost-benefit analysis as there still exists split opinion within the United States Administration. Michael Hayden, former Director Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), said on 25 July 2010 in an interview to CNN that during his tenure, “a strike was way down the list of options”<sup>25</sup>. These mixed signals could be part of an overall strategy aiming at the Iranian political and military leadership guessing about the possibility and timings of such an attack. On the Iranian side, the preparation for a military response is also in place. To deter such a

possibility, the modernization of its arsenals is underway. Russia may have supplied S-300 STA missiles to Iran that would increase the cost and complexity of any strike against Iran. It would substantially dilute a potential Israeli attack. Israel is already in contact with Russia for blocking the sale of these state-of-the-art air defence missiles to Iran<sup>26</sup>. Besides these military preparations, other cold and soft options through covert means are also underway alongside to undermine development in the Iranian nuclear programme. Reportedly, a software smart bomb, (highly sophisticated computer worm) *Stuxnet* was launched against industrial plants worldwide in general and targeting Iranian nuclear power plant at Bushehr in particular<sup>27</sup>. The extent of damage that has been caused to the nuclear plant is not fully known but it is assumed that it was aimed to determine the stage of the progress made and ascertaining the criticality by interpreting the classified details/formulae hacked through the said virus. Any adventure on the part of United States would fuel anti –United States feelings in Iran and further complicate Pakistan-Iran relations as some critics in Iran perceive Pakistan to be serving the objective of American foreign policy agenda in South West Asia<sup>28</sup>. Pakistan's steadfastness against US pressures has convinced the Iranian leadership of any such undesirable eventuality. But under the present offer of dialogue by the US, the chances of such an attack are though remote, yet are not far-fetched. It is visualized that the Hot and Cold, a combination of diplomatic overtures and military posturing, is likely to continue. United States has amassed around 45,000 troops in South and East of Afghanistan in Helmond Province bordering Iran. The troop surge in Afghanistan is also to see some more addition in areas bordering Iran as well. While talking to Thai television Secretary of State Hillary Clinton offered to extend defence umbrella to allies, "We want Iran to calculate what I think is a fair assessment: that if the United States extends a defence umbrella over the region, if we do even more to develop the military capacity of those in the Gulf, it is unlikely that Iran will be any stronger or safer because they won't be able to intimidate and dominate....."<sup>29</sup> It drew a quick rebuke from Israel where a senior minister said it sounded that the United States, "had come to terms with a nuclear Iran". Israel also admitted holding of direct nuclear talks with Iran which has been denied by Iran<sup>30</sup>. This is an interesting development. It

is visualised that Iran will retaliate massively to any physical attack on its nuclear sites. Nobody is claiming that there would be an all out invasion of Iran, at best it could be a mix of air strikes and quick small special raids on nuclear sites and key military installations. Such raids, however, are not that simple and quick as they are thought of to be.

However, owing to geo-political development the possibility of attack is rather low. United States at the same time continues to allay the fears of Gulf states by providing them arms and missiles. Eight Patriot missile batteries — two each in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and United Arab Emirates — were not there two years before<sup>31</sup>. Other gulf countries have also expanded their patriot systems while United States-operated Aegis ballistic missile cruisers, are in the Gulf at all times now. United States reiterates that “Defence Capability” has been built, but it is not something sparked by events in Iran in recent months. However, with Iran agreeing for a swap over deal recently in May 2010 should help diffuse the looming dangers of any military adventurism for some time now. Implications of air strikes over Iran could be enormous as Americans would never be sure of decisively neutralizing Iranian capabilities. This may leave the United States with no option but to contend with the status quo on Iran and keep it diplomatically and economically isolated through tough sanction regime.

### ***Author***

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## ISAF, AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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### ***Abstract***

*Afghanistan, the crossroads of civilizations, has been at the centre stage of global power play for centuries. The Soviet invasion (1979-1989) and resultant US covert campaign against former Soviet Union has deeply influenced the social, political and economic sphere of Afghanistan and its neighbouring Pakistan. Soviet withdrawal in 1989, followed by US's hasty departure, encouraged factional fighting and civil war in Afghanistan. The situation paved the way for the religiously-motivated Taliban Government, which being ruthless in nature, neither succeeded in securing public acceptance at home, nor could win the recognition of international community. The US-led military operation in Afghanistan in the aftermath of 9/11 further destabilized the country. After eleven years of military campaigning, the US-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), could not subdue the Taliban in Afghanistan. Ironically, whilst today the international and domestic support for the US-led war on terror is waning, Taliban are growing stronger strategically and more influential politically, and posing a more formidable challenge to both the legitimacy of the Afghan administration and effectiveness of ISAF. Despite the drawdown plan of ISAF by 2014, a comprehensive political and military strategy for the Post-2014 Afghanistan has yet to be agreed upon. Envisioning a troubled future, US has engaged in covert negotiations with the Taliban either to have an honourable exit, or else for a peaceful co-existence. However, no major breakthrough could be attained yet, owing to deplorable demands on either side. The people of war-torn Afghanistan need stability and peace in their homeland. Attaining such, a situation would call for an indigenous Afghan-led peace process, taking on board all stakeholders in Afghanistan, supported by regional actors, NATO and United States. This paper aims at undertaking a detailed appraisal of Challenges and Opportunities for ISAF in Afghanistan from an academic approach.*



## **Introduction**

*In the ultimate analysis, if people of Afghanistan and their coming generations view US and coalition as friends, war can be won. If they think otherwise it would be considered as lost.*

(General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani)<sup>1</sup>

During the joint news conference with President Hamid Karzai at White House, on January 11, 2013, President Obama announced pulling out of all US forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014. President Obama said, “By the end of next year, 2014, the transition will be complete. Afghans will have full responsibility for their security, and this war will come to a responsible end.”<sup>2</sup> Indeed, 2014 represents a transition point not only for Afghanistan but also for the entire region. The strategic landscape of Afghanistan is witnessing a steady but profound shift, as the drawdown date of ISAF (i.e. 2014) is rapidly approaching. The political and strategic groundwork undertaken within this timeframe will largely determine the outcome for the future of Afghanistan. Despite differences, there remains established closeness between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both share similar culture and society – same religion and norms. Thus, being a responsible neighbour, Pakistan will continue to monitor the developments in Afghanistan. It will also continue to play a constructive role to end the war in the interest of Afghanistan and for a long-term regional peace and stability.

Some key questions about the nature of post-2014 geopolitical order in Afghanistan need further probing. These include: What will be the future political setup in Afghanistan best suited to ensure stability in relations with all its neighbours? What will be the nature of ISAF and particularly US commitments to Afghanistan after 2014? Would there be a complete departure of ISAF or will US preserve PMBs (Permanent Military Bases) beyond 2014? Will Afghan security forces be able to take on the security responsibilities of the country after drawdown of ISAF? What role India foresees in the future Afghan setup? How will

the border security mechanisms between Pakistan and Afghanistan work; particularly under an environment of a greater mistrust and militants attack on Pakistani positions from Afghan soil?

A calibrated response to these questions will shape the nature of Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, United States and ISAF. In the past, this relationship has been professed by a mirage of daunting and glaring issues between US and Pakistan – ranging from cooperation to a near hostility. The latest manifestation of this bumpy relationship has been the almost seven months blockade of NATO logistic supply lines, in the aftermath of the NATO attack on Pakistani military posts, killing 24 soldiers on 26 November 2011. This was indeed, the latest blatant violation of Pakistani sovereignty by ISAF, and happened while Pakistan is an ally and frontline partner of the US-led coalition in Afghanistan. Such like incidents clearly indicate that the relationship between Pakistan and US lacks a credible strategic foundation, thus, continues to largely remain transactional in nature.

Despite eleven years of deployment with absolute operational freedom, ISAF has not succeeded in creating conditions on the ground conducive for peace and stability in Afghanistan. Besides Afghanistan, Pakistan, its immediate neighbour, is facing the consequences of conflict that has steadily spilled over into its territory. Indeed, the progress of ISAF in Afghanistan with regard to security and development during the last one decade is being visualized as a source of pessimism. It has not improved from what it was envisaged by Professor Barnett R. Rubin, a US expert on Afghanistan, presently Director of Studies in the Centre on International Cooperation, New York University in 2009; as

*“The situation in Afghanistan has turned so far against the United States, NATO, the international community, and those Afghans who originally hoped that the post-September 11 intervention would finally bring them a chance for normal lives.”<sup>3</sup>*

### **ISAF: Achievements versus Mandate**

The basic objective of establishing ISAF, set forth by Bonn Conference of 5 December 2001, formalized through United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 of 20 December 2001, was to assist Afghan Government for the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, to create favourable atmosphere for the transitional Afghan Administration as well as the UN personnel.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, it is pertinent to mention the UNSC Resolution (1386/2001) adopted in its 4443rd meeting; that

*“Authorizes, as envisaged in Annex 1 to the Bonn Agreement, the establishment for 6 months of an International Security Assistance Force to assist the Afghan Interim Authority in the maintenance of security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, so that the Afghan Interim Authority as well as the personnel of the United Nations can operate in a secure environment.”<sup>5</sup>*

Over the years, the role of ISAF extended throughout the country. Under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, ISAF was assigned peace enforcement mandate in Afghanistan. After taking over the command of ISAF in August 2003, NATO maintains significant troops' contributions in Afghanistan. Indeed, NATO is assisting Afghan Government in exercising and extending its authority and influence throughout, “paving the way for reconstruction and effective governance.”<sup>6</sup>

After initial success of ISAF against Taliban in 2001-02, the US diverted its efforts and resources towards the Iraq war. Resultantly, there remained a lull-period from 2002 to 2005, which gave Taliban a respite to reorganize their movement and regain the local support. ISAF and US could have used these years for winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan masses, who otherwise were frustrated during Taliban rule. This was not done and, unfortunately, ISAF and US are yet to succeed in engaging Afghan masses in economic activities through formulation of a long-term strategy. General Stanley McChrystal in his assessment

report also stressed for buying the loyalties of locals, rather use of military might.<sup>7</sup> Since mid-2010, ISAF claims to have achieved considerable progress in Southern Afghanistan, with regard to bringing violence to a manageable level. Nevertheless, these gains proved fragile and reversible, as proved by a surge of violent attacks, and also recognized by the ISAF officials. In a statement, former British Ambassador to Afghanistan Sir Sherard Louis Cowper-Coles said that,

*“The real danger that the fragile gains made in the country would quickly evaporate when British and American troops leave in 2014. What we are doing, essentially, is cultivating an allotment in a jungle, and the question is what happens when the gardeners leave?”<sup>8</sup>*

According to US Council on Foreign Relations, US military also views its gains in Afghanistan as “fragile and reversible.”<sup>9</sup> There is a consensus among the scholars of international relations that, for a durable and sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan, Afghan conflict has to be brought to a responsible end through a political process. This political process needs to be all-inclusive and Afghan-led with assistance afforded by ISAF, particularly United States and relevant regional stakeholders. From the point of view of the classical realists and constructivists, all major stakeholders have yet to contribute for Afghan peace. A plausible and logical argument of this honest confession is that, none alone could bring peace and stability in that war-torn country after eleven years of sustained violence. Resultantly, the poor Afghans are spending their lives in the same impecunious condition with the same uncertainty and in dearth as it was during or prior to Taliban regime.

The writer and scholar Anthony H. Cordesman and Adam Mausner of Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) write in their joint publication entitled, ‘How the US Will Win or Lose the War’ that, “No strategy for Afghanistan can be successful unless it answers the most basic question of going to war: can we win?<sup>10</sup> *The answer is yes, provided that victory is defined in realistic and practical terms.* With the appropriate US leadership, it is still possible to help build an Afghanistan that is stable and

secure enough to ensure that it cannot become a centre for international terrorism again, or a centre of Jihadist operations throughout the world, a threat shared by Pakistan and other nations in the region. This will not be an arrangement that ensures victory underscoring the level of development, mature democracy, and Western concepts of human rights in Afghanistan. It can, however, be a kind of victory that allows the Afghans to pursue their destiny in relative peace.

While General McCrystal lost his job for giving a realistic picture of his assessment of the situation in Afghanistan in 2009, his successor and the defamed former Director CIA Gen. David Petraeus too could not claim a victory despite heavy surge in US troops and Special Forces – up to 148,000 ISAF troops. Gen. Petraeus once questioned by Diane Sawyer, ABC World News' anchor, whether the US was winning in Afghanistan. He replied, "We're making progress."<sup>11</sup> He further said that, "We're really loathed to use this very loaded term of winning or losing."<sup>12</sup> The former US Secretary of Defence, Robert Gates, on a similar question replied,

*"Modern wars rarely end in decisive victories and that they are usually concluded through negotiated settlements. We have not had a declared victory in a war, with the possible exception of the first Gulf War, since World War II. It is the phenomenon of modern conflict. The key is, are our interests protected? Is the security of the United States protected? Are the Americans safer at the end because of the sacrifice these soldiers have made? That's the real question."<sup>13</sup>*

After this forthright assessment of US engagement in Afghanistan, the question arises, where does Afghanistan and poor Afghans stand in the US priorities? At the end of the day, US interests overrides Afghan interests. This appraisal further gives rise to questions like, does 'Operation Enduring Freedom' carry some meaning for the ultimate peace and stability in Afghanistan or was it only meant to ensure the long-term security and protection of United States regional interests – including deterring threats of potential terrorists hailing from this soil.

## **Dilemma and Challenges Facing ISAF**

In many ways, ISAF presence in Afghanistan is a source of sustaining the conflict, yet at the same time, it is crucial for protecting a weak government in Kabul. This paradox is critical from Pakistan's perspective when it reviews its relationship with ISAF and its security role in Afghanistan. United States, a super power and the largest contributor of troops, holds the key of Afghan theatre. London-based International Council on Security and Development (ICOS), in its report notes that, "Insurgents are now avoiding fire fights and direct attacks on NATO-ISAF/Afghan positions, and are focusing on using roadside bombs and targeted killings instead."<sup>14</sup>

By virtue of its mandate, ISAF is responsible for the security of Afghanistan and, resultantly, Pakistan directly faces consequences of its actions there. Unfortunately, from 2010 to mid-2012, Pak-US relationship has been rocked by the elements of mutual mistrust and uncertainty. Academia and analysts in Pakistan consider under-mentioned factors as the benchmark with relation to the progress made by ISAF in Afghanistan in last 11 years. It is all the more important to understand the fact that these indicators cover broad spectrum of issues beyond tactical level discussion and directly affect Pakistan, both domestically and regionally.

## **Level of Violence in Afghanistan**

Despite heavy military presence and military operations, there has been a gradual deterioration in the security situation in Afghanistan, compared to Kabul's pre-2005 situation. Some of the key areas, totalling over half the Afghanistan land mass, are still dominated by the Taliban and warlords. Surely, this does not mean a Taliban takeover of Afghanistan is imminent, but implies the fact that ISAF is not winning either. US Department of Defense in its 2010 semi-annual report to Congress titled "Progress towards security and stability in Afghanistan" painted a bleak picture of security situation in Afghanistan. The report

says, “Overall trend of violence throughout the country increased over the same period a year ago, much of this can be ascribed to increased International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) activity.... The Afghan insurgency has a robust means of sustaining its operations. Small arms weapons and ammunition are readily available throughout the region, in addition to sources of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and home-made explosive materials and technology.”<sup>15</sup>

US Department of Defense in its 2012 semi-annual report to Congress painted a cautiously optimistic picture of security situation in Afghanistan in these words,

*“The year 2011 saw the first year-over-year decline in nationwide enemy-initiated attacks in five years. These trends have continued in 2012. The performance of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the close partnership between the ANSF and ISAF have been keys to this success... Despite these and other positive trends during the reporting period, the campaign also continued to face both long-term and acute challenges.... The insurgency remains a resilient and determined enemy and will likely attempt to regain lost ground and influence”*<sup>16</sup>

The spectacular attacks in Kabul on high value targets signify the fact that level of violence had not been contained to a low-scale and ISAF have not been able to create conditions on ground conducive for security in Afghanistan. The mounting civilian casualties within Afghanistan, partly due to infamous night raids by ISAF, remain one of the contributory factors that promote and add to the wave of violence in Afghanistan. Attacking peaceful ceremonies, resulting in killing of innocent civilians, women and children, disgracing the Afghan dead bodies through urination and desecration of Holy Quran<sup>17</sup> are some of very provocative acts, undertaken by the personnel of ISAF and such acts catalyze the growing wave of violence in Afghanistan.

## **Political Process in Afghanistan**

The increase in insurgent violence in Afghanistan can partly be attributed to failure of US in bringing the Taliban and other insurgent leaders to the negotiating table. In Bonn Conference on Afghanistan in December 2001, Taliban and Pashtun representatives were left out, whereas, small groups were made part of the conference and later in interim Afghan government. Out of total expenditures of \$550 billion in Afghanistan by ISAF and US, only \$89 billion were spent for Afghan rebuilding, with bulk spent on ANA/ANP.<sup>18</sup>

Qatar peace process and other negotiations between Taliban and US, initiated some time back, did not make headway. Both parties are blaming each other for being inflexible in their demands. Analysts view that the peace process has little prospects of success unless there is a degree of trust and confidence amongst the Taliban that US will deliver on its promises and commitments. Another drawback with these negotiations was that, only selected individuals and less important/isolated groups of Taliban or Haqqani Group were chosen for dialogue. President Obama and President Karzai have agreed on 11 January 2013 to continue facilitating the Qatar chapter of Taliban office for a purposeful dialogue in future.

So far, ISAF and US have not made any meaningful offers to persuade Taliban and other groups to come to the negotiations table. Taliban and other opposition groups are not ready to accept the Afghan Constitution, as it is against the basic Afghan tribal structure. Furthermore, Taliban are not ready to accept US demand of laying down arms as a precondition for negotiation. Taliban fear that the aim of negotiations is just to break the momentum of their movement, otherwise, the ultimate aim of US remains to defeat them with force.

## **Challenges to Afghan Security Forces**

Establishment of a professional and capable Afghan national security forces before ISAF leaves remains a crucial step. This is essential, as ANSF



has taken over control of maximum areas of Afghanistan from ISAF. Though the process of delegation of security responsibilities to ANSF by ISAF is still continuing, yet there are apprehensions about the capabilities of the former to take on these responsibilities. In September 2012, ISAF handed over 282 bases to ANSF and closed around 202 bases and posts as part of its drawdown plan.<sup>19</sup> Since then the handing-over process of remaining 400 military posts and bases is going on. US is renovating even some strategically located bases and likely to hold those till its final departure or may like to convert those as PMBs. Nevertheless, Brig Gen Steven Shapiro said in a statement that, “As our Afghan security force partners take more responsibility for their own security, more bases will be closing and transitioning.”<sup>20</sup> He further said that, “Our footprint here will continue to shrink.”<sup>21</sup>

In the preceding years, the desertion rate of ANA remains high, while green on blue attacks are on the rise, forcing ISAF to halt the training process in some areas. Security of those districts transferred to ANA is posing new challenges. To be effective, ISAF needs to continue training of ANSF until it attains excellence. ISAF needs to work closely with ANSF for creating an ethnic balance among all positions of ANSF. There is an immediate need to halt infiltration of Taliban among the ranks of ANSF, a new emergent challenge. Besides, there is a very high rate of attrition (2% per month — 7,5000 per year) and huge dropouts of about 30-40 per cent from training centres and academies. To make up for this loss, new recruitment drive is undertaken repeatedly.

### **Erecting a Parallel Force Mechanism**

Over the years, ISAF has established a parallel force mechanism in the form of new militias, local armed groups, like Afghan Local Police (ALP), Special Police, village protection teams, and other mushroom organizations, to control Taliban insurgency. For an example, for 68 districts of Afghanistan, 16,000 ALP personnel have been deployed with latest weapons and equipment. The process may provide temporary relief to ISAF, but in the long-term it will be difficult to manage, especially

after the drawdown of ISAF. Thus, ALP may become a nuisance for their opponents in a future scenario. Killing ISAF troops in Kandahar by ALP chief in August 2012 is a case in point. Coupled with this, green over blue incidents account for 14% of coalition casualties in 2012 only.<sup>22</sup>

### **Increase in the Poppy Cultivation**

Although poppy is cultivated in Afghanistan since centuries, yet there has been unprecedented increase in its cultivation in the country from 2002 to 2012. The opium and other drugs are then smuggled all over the world, especially, Europe and Russia. Each year Europe receives over \$65 billion opium from Afghanistan and 30,000 Russians are becoming drug addicts because of this trend.<sup>23</sup> According to UN drug control agency, the opium produced in Afghanistan is equal to 9 per cent<sup>24</sup> of Afghanistan's entire economy. Irrespective of its beneficiaries, ISAF has not been able to control its cultivation, processing and its smuggling elsewhere, which is creating concern among global human right organizations.

### **The Element of Mistrust and Respecting Sovereignty**

Immediately after the US led ISAF military operation in 2001-2, Pakistan established over 1,000 military check posts and deployed 150,000 troops along Pak-Afghan border to control the militants' flow on either side.<sup>25</sup> Despite severe economic losses and unprecedented human sufferings during the campaign against terror, Pakistan is still not trusted by ISAF and US and is repeatedly criticized for its lack of 'quantum of efforts' and is being pressed to 'do more'. A quick empirical overview would point to the fact that the number of Pakistani civilian casualties have exceeded 41,000 (deaths) besides martyrdom of over 5,000 personnel of security forces during last decade of war on terror.<sup>26</sup> As compared to these Pakistani casualties, ISAF casualties are 3,256 only.<sup>27</sup> Among coalition partners, US casualties are 2,175 until mid January 2013.<sup>28</sup>

Economically, Pakistan has suffered losses of over \$68 billion,<sup>29</sup> besides indirect losses in shape of missed opportunities of Foreign Direct

Investment. Furthermore, incidents like Salala attack, killing 24 Pakistani soldiers, Abbottabad raid to kill Osama Bin Laden and CIA driven drone attacks significantly shapes Pakistan's perception about International Security Assistance Force and US. Such incidents violated the sovereignty of Pakistan and created misperceptions among the masses that perhaps peace and stability in the region is not the ultimate objective of US and the main driver of ISAF. To prevent such incidents in future, the already established mechanism of border security management between Pakistan and ISAF needs to be made effective, with reliable communication from both sides to prevent any misinterpretation of intent. With respect to its sovereignty, Pakistan has legitimate reservations about the role of ISAF, though there is a difference in the perceptions of Pakistan and US about this conflict.

### **Imperatives for Economic Development**

International community, especially European Union, has been generous in giving the financial assistance for reconstruction of war-torn Afghanistan. A lot of foreign capital has flown into Afghanistan, but this inflow has only provided minimal contributions in the nation-building and economic-development process. With the exception of Northern and some Eastern parts, generally there has been a stalled economic development process in Afghanistan, mainly owing to uncertain and deteriorating security situation. Initially Pakistan appreciated a situation that ISAF would be able to contain violence and bring peace in Afghanistan, paving way for the regional economic development through the projects, like TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) gas pipeline. Nevertheless, so far TAPI remains a distant dream. Within Afghanistan, there exist limited opportunities for economic activities to provide for the jobless youth, a vital segment that tends to engage in militant activities because of economic deprivations.

Douglas A. Wissing, a distinguished US writer and journalist, revealed some not-widely-known facts about the US campaign in Afghanistan in his book, "Funding the Enemy: How US Taxpayers Bankroll the Taliban."

He wrote about misuse of American taxpayer's money and said, "With the vague intention of winning hearts and minds in Afghanistan, the US government has mismanaged billions of development and logistics dollars, bolstered the drug trade, and dumped untold millions into Taliban hands."<sup>30</sup> Billions of dollars have been given to Taliban so that they do not attack the US soldiers and target its military bases. This amount, if utilized appropriately, could have created significant economic opportunities that would have benefited the common Afghan, instead of a militant group, fighting ISAF and US.

### **Pak-Afghan Border Security: Cross Border Raids inside Pakistan**

Issue of cross-border incursions and raids by militants inside Pakistan, both by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and their Afghan allies, has been a point of concern for Pakistan. Then the security arrangements on Pakistan-Afghanistan border remain one of the most important and contested issues between Pakistan and ISAF. Following the Malakand, Swat and South Waziristan military operations against TTP in 2009-10, the top leadership of TTP, along with its several hundred members, fled Pakistan and found sanctuaries in adjoining provinces of Afghanistan, despite heavy deployment of ISAF in those areas. Now frequent raids are originating from these areas on Pakistani military posts and against civil population inside Pakistan. With still deployed in most of Afghan territory having operational command of Afghanistan, ISAF failed to address this issue to the satisfaction of Pakistan.

Growing perception in Pakistan is that ISAF's inaction on these raids is its tacit approval, or else a quid pro quo by ISAF, that it would take action against these elements only if Pakistan responds by doing the same in North Waziristan. It is realized that efforts in resolving this problem through a strict border control mechanism would significantly boost Pakistan-ISAF relationship and truly transform the strategic landscape of the region in favour of the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The most effective and well-coordinated strategy could be that while Pakistan pounds militants from western flank, ISAF reciprocate Pakistani efforts by denying militants a free ride across border.

## **Deviation from Primary Objectives**

The initial military objective of ISAF for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) as outlined by President George W. Bush on 20 September 2001 and 7 October 2001 was: “destruction of terrorist training camps and infrastructure within Afghanistan, the capture of Al Qaeda leaders, and the cessation of terrorist activities in Afghanistan.”<sup>31</sup> Besides, Gen James John claims that “the maximum estimate is less than 100 (Al Qaeda members) operating in (Afghanistan), no bases, no ability to launch attacks on us or our allies.”<sup>32</sup> Since this claim was initially made in mid 2010, which implies that there would be further reduction in the number of Al Qaeda operatives by January 2013, thus minimizing threat for Al-Qaeda takeover. This also means that ISAF and particularly US may not be eyeing for a long-term stay in Afghanistan. However, there remains ambiguity about the future plans of US. United States and Afghanistan have agreed in the Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)-2012, on a long-term stay there. In one article, Alissa J. Rubin quotes an American official who confirms about SPA that, “This is the proof in the pudding that we intend to be there.”<sup>33</sup> Rubin clearly indicates that US plans to stay in Afghanistan for an indefinite period.

Besides, immediately after Lisbon Summit-2010, a senior official of the State Department said that, “The issue of changing combat missions is an independent national decision, which will be made by all 28 members of NATO. In the case of the United States, we simply have not taken that decision yet.”<sup>34</sup> He further said that President Obama has “not decided yet” to change to a non-combat mission in 2014. Nevertheless, President Obama himself said that, “Certainly our footprint will have been significantly reduced (by 2014). Beyond that, it is hard to anticipate exactly what will be necessary to keep the American people safe as of 2014. I’ll make that determination when I get there.”<sup>35</sup>

## **Difference in Perception about the Conflict**

The first and the foremost challenge is the difference in perception about the conflict. United States and ISAF perceive that the centre

of gravity of Afghan resistance lies in the tribal areas of Pakistan and believe that Pakistan provides support to insurgent forces attacking ISAF and Afghan forces. US have also been suspicious about the presence of Quetta Shura, a body of Taliban under Mullah Omar in Quetta, Pakistan. Pakistan rejects this presupposition and is of the view that it is actually the ungoverned space within Afghanistan, which acts as a source of logistical support for insurgency. Furthermore, Pakistan firmly believes that the centre of gravity of Afghan conflict remains inside Afghanistan.

This conflict in threat perception remains an obstacle for improving cooperation between Pakistan and ISAF. Linked with this misperception is another misconstrued idea of 'strategic depth'. Pakistani strategists believe that 'Strategic depth' does not imply controlling Afghanistan. "If Afghanistan is peaceful, stable and friendly we have our strategic depth because our western border is secured ... You're not looking both ways."<sup>36</sup> By this very concept, Pakistan does not pursue the policy of controlling Afghanistan. There appears to be diminution in misperception following the improvement in the bilateral relations between US and Pakistan, particularly after mid 2012, once Pakistan reopened NATO supply route through its soil. Pakistan is also facilitating US-Taliban negotiations and has released some of imprisoned Taliban leaders from its jails.<sup>37</sup>

### **Lacking a Clear Strategy of Ending Afghan War**

The second challenge to this cooperation is the lack of a clear strategy and objectives among the ISAF allies, and an ambiguous modus operandi of concluding this conflict. This creates varied perceptions within Pakistan about the motivations and long-term strategic goals of Western powers in the region. For example, on one side it is argued by most ISAF member-countries that they would be withdrawing from Afghanistan by 2014, while on the other end, one particular country has secured bilateral agreements with Kabul to stay beyond 2014. This lack of clarity and mixed signals approach creates doubts within Pakistan, and Islamabad fears that conflict will prolong in the region if complete withdrawal of ISAF forces does not take place. Furthermore, harmonizing the interests of Pakistan with that

of the extra-regional powers active in Afghanistan is pivotal, as Pakistan will remain a key player in new regional security architecture.

Until now, United States has not clearly defined its future strategy about its complete pull out or otherwise. Though President Obama announced complete drawdown by the end of 2014, yet this statement seems ambiguous, as he is asking immunity for his troops from Afghan Government after 2014. Regarding attainment of the objectives of war in Afghanistan, even President Obama is unclear. In response to a question about the cost of the war in terms of lives and money, President Obama said that

*“We achieved our central goal ... or have come very close to achieving our central goal, which is to de-capacitate al Qaeda, to dismantle them, to make sure that they can't attack us again. Have we achieved everything that some might have imagined us achieving in the best of scenarios? Probably not. This is a human enterprise, and you fall short of the ideal.”<sup>38</sup>*

### **Beyond Reconstruction: Indian Role in Afghanistan**

As an established US ally, Pakistan has made incomparable and enormous contributions towards international community. This is particularly true in the case of US during Cold War as well as in the ongoing War against terrorism. Now Pakistan feels that, US while disregarding its sacrifices, is promoting Indian role in Afghanistan, at the cost of Pakistani security concerns. Pakistan has its apprehensions about the future role of India in Afghanistan. It desires that Indian role should be restricted to reconstruction activities following a timeline. Moreover, training of ANSF and Afghan intelligence organizations and establishing consulates along Pak-Afghan border by India would further complicate threat matrix for Pakistan concerning its security along western borders. Indeed, there is a historical context to this rivalry between Pakistan and India over the unresolved issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan feel itself vulnerable from India along its eastern borders, opening another front along its western borders would be the worst security threat for Pakistan.

Pakistan always remained apprehensive about traditional Indian military threats on the issue of Kashmir along its eastern borders. Despite progress in the Indo-Pak peace process in the recent years, there remains tension between the two militaries during January 2013. Moreover, sporadic incidents by even non-state actors can cause misunderstanding among the rival states, as happened after Mumbai Attacks. President Obama himself declared Kashmir issue as the root cause of South Asian instability in 2008.<sup>39</sup> He stressed for its just solution, but unknown reasons barred him from undertaking any such step.<sup>40</sup> ISAF in general and United States in particular would have to take practical measures to arrest and address this Pakistani concern before final drawdown by 2014. Pakistan will not accept any force in Afghanistan that is hostile to its strategic and security interests and Islamabad will continue to exercise its influence to prevent the worst from taking place. Besides, Pakistan cannot accept India as a successor state to replace US in Afghanistan, owing to its security concerns.

### **Challenges Constraining Pakistani Limits of Engagement**

There is a deep scepticism about public opinion related to US-led ISAF presence in Afghanistan. This uncertainty is further fuelled by continuous and unchecked drone attacks and violation of sovereignty of Pakistan. With these events as evidence and frequent accusations on various accounts by US, masses in Pakistan have strong reason to believe that Pakistani and international forces' interests are at odds in the region, which resultantly limits Pakistan's capacity to engage with ISAF.

Nevertheless, prospects of any meaningful cooperation between allies depend upon shared threat perception, commitments that are sustainable, clear strategy and expectations that can be met. This matrix of variables can be generally applied to test the strength of partnership and cooperation between allies. When this benchmark is applied to Pakistan-ISAF relationship, significant challenges come to the light as discussed above. Pakistan believes that in order to develop an equitable and acceptable framework for cooperation, these challenges must be resolved



on a priority basis as a confidence building measure. Keeping in view the 2014 timeline and shifting trends in regional strategic landscape, such a framework based on confidence-building measures between Pakistan and ISAF is essential to be formulated, for any substantive and timely progress in resolving the Afghan conflict.

### **The Way Forward: A Revised Context of Pak-ISAF Partnership**

No country will benefit more from a secure and stable Afghanistan than Pakistan. Pakistan seeks peaceful relations with both its Eastern and Western neighbours based on sovereign equality, respect for mutual interests and dignity. It is, therefore, in the national interest of Pakistan that Afghanistan should be peaceful and stable. As highlighted above, there lie many complexities that Pakistan perceives as formidable obstacles to achieving peace in Afghanistan. Some of the steps are recommended below as a way forward for a stable and peaceful Afghanistan.

**Constitutional Reforms in Line with Afghan Traditions:** Historical, cultural, geographical and political discourse of Afghanistan's history suggests that there has never been a strong centralized federal government in Afghanistan, as the current constitution dictates. Rather, there has been an acceptable quasi-central government with strong tribal periphery. Connected to this reality is the fact that there are multiple power centres in Afghanistan's tribal society, which make it a difficult task to reconcile competing interests. How practical and sustainable is this idea of having a structure that constitutes a strong central government, as envisioned by US, remains a big question. To be acceptable by all Afghan factions, be it ethnic and/or religious diasporas, there is a need to reform the current constitution, accommodating the tribal needs of the country. ISAF and US need to extend full cooperation to incumbent Afghan Government in this regard.

**Governance Reforms:** One of the pertinent causes contributing to the sufferings of Afghan people is the abhorrent state of governance in Afghanistan. Corruption, nepotism, violation of merit and dishonesty

is the order of day in Afghanistan. Owing to these factors, caused by poor governance, there is a growing discontentment among the public. ISAF and United States need to enforce such reforms, which build up confidence of the people in the national governance system. Otherwise, a common Afghan is compelled to think that ISAF is deliberately supporting a corrupt governance system, to suit its stakes, instead of entertaining whims and desires of Afghans. ISAF has to take measures to arrest this rapidly growing perception.

**Security Reforms:** With respect to security, there also exists uncertainty among the people of Afghanistan. Where they feel sacred and terrorized from Taliban and other warlords, they do not feel protected from the ISAF either. If Taliban have been brutal towards Afghan people, ISAF also has bombed many innocents during night raids, marriage ceremonies and funeral processions. There is a growing need for ISAF to take measures that dilute the sense of insecurity prevailing among Afghan masses and actively attempt at replacing those sentiments with a sense of security for a common Afghan.

**Synergy of Interests: International, Regional and Domestic:** Looking towards post-2014 scenario, unless there is a synergy of interests at international, regional and domestic level, Afghan conflict will persist and its people will be the ultimate sufferers. Complete withdrawal of ISAF forces from Afghanistan is the only attractive option for domestic stakeholders in Afghanistan including Taliban. Such a strategy would have the acceptance of regional and global powers. However, ISAF has to bring peace and stability before its departure from Afghanistan, rather leaving the country with an uncertain future, leading to anarchy and civil war. This indeed is an exigent task, asking for a change of strategy; offensive to reconciliatory and political approach.

**Reconciliation and Political Integration:** As the focus in Afghanistan shifts from surge to transition, the important prerequisite for the success in the country lies in the formulation, implementation and pace of reconciliation process in place. Who are reconcilable elements?

Can there be a distinction between reconcilable and irreconcilable elements within Afghan resistance? What political compromises will be made between relevant stakeholders? These are some of the key questions that should be answered without ambiguity, as failure to do so will result in continuation of stalemate in Afghanistan and transition may not occur, which is a desirable end state.

The political integration process in Afghanistan has to be all inclusive and Afghan led with all the domestic power centres included in a grand bargain so that an end state i.e. transition takes place. In this context, Pakistan has always expressed its desire to help reach this end state through its historical, cultural and political relations with Afghanistan. Pakistan's Chief of the Army Staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani outlined the broad contours of Pakistan's vision for a peaceful Afghanistan in a letter to US president Barack Obama in 2011, in which he stated:

*“What is the way forward in Afghanistan? The end condition that we seek in Afghanistan is enduring peace based on stable environment. It is important to define peace and stability in Afghan context, which may well be less than perfect. Here stability is the key, which is essentially a function of balance. Balance in turn, is achieved by identifying and reconciling extremes. It implies that all the factions in Afghanistan should have a stake in peace process. .... Manoeuvring space is dependent on available time and resources. Time is short and resources limited. Idealism will have to operate within confines of hard ground realities. .... In the ultimate analysis, if people of Afghanistan and their coming generations view US and coalition as friends, war can be won. If they think otherwise it would be considered as lost.”<sup>41</sup>*

**Working out a Framework for Cooperation between Pakistan and ISAF:** The framework of cooperation between Pakistan and ISAF should be based upon two pillars; First, the shared belief of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan through an all-inclusive approach; Secondly, basis of the cooperative framework should rest on sovereign equality, mutual respect

and a drive for sustainable peace. This framework will tantamount to a strategic overhauling of the entire Pak-ISAF relationship and absence of these pillars will only add to regional instability. This framework of cooperation should include components such as benchmarks, timelines, mutual discussions on strategic and tactical issues, clear responsibilities and roles, prioritizing issues and a feedback process.

Benchmarks should include setting realistic targets that are achievable in a constrained timeframe. Timelines would naturally include the transition timetable set at 2014. Mutual discussion on strategic and tactical issues will bring transparency into the framework while removing mutual suspicion and scepticism. Clear responsibilities should entail unambiguous role of stakeholders involved in conflict resolution. For example, Pakistan is the only country that can ensure peace within its own boundaries while ISAF is responsible for the security of Afghanistan. The feedback process should include the top political and military leadership of ISAF, Pakistan and Afghanistan to critically evaluate the progress on ground and pace of achieving agreed political objectives to end the conflict. The stability of this framework will stem from a shared belief in stability of Afghanistan.

## **Conclusion**

Pakistan sees the region in transition as both an opportunity and a peril; in both short and long-term perspective. The outcome of this transition will largely depend upon the strategic decisions taken today in favour of peace and stability. Pakistan finds itself at the centre of debate and desires to build a region where regional interests converge and stability thrives, thereby creating a space for economic growth and prosperity long desired by the people of the region.

In this context, Pakistan sees its relationship with ISAF as critical for redrawing the contours of regional environment that is conducive for ending the longest conflict in recent history. Ultimately, it would be Pakistan's relationship with ISAF that would determine the trajectory of developments in the region generally and in Afghanistan particularly.

For this trajectory to be in a positive direction, the onus is on both Pakistan and ISAF to clear mutual suspicion and anxieties that is the product of lack of a unified regional vision. If, from an ISAF perspective, the broader vision is to shape the regional environment aimed at containing regional powers, then Pakistan and ISAF may well be on the divergent paths while the negation of this vision will bolster the relationship.

Pakistan also expects ISAF to improve its performance in Afghanistan that creates conditions on the ground for reconciliation, integration and bringing the violence to manageable levels. On a parallel path, Pakistan expects to be in a decision-making loop at both strategic and tactical level for better coordination and management of border. Erecting a legitimate, all inclusive, accountable and representative political structure in Afghanistan is the most fundamental and toughest challenge faced by both, ISAF and Pakistan.

Finally, in the light of the discussion, can there be reasons for optimism for future? The answer remains unpredictable as too many complex variables are at play, some may not be in total control of stakeholders. What is hopeful, however, is an overall realization to bring the Afghan conflict to a responsible end, which has bled the region, hurt Pakistan badly and worried the entire world.

Being critical in nature, ISAF-Pakistan relationships could become a bridge between the two civilizations at a crucial juncture in human history and help bring a long lasting peace to Afghanistan, stability in the region and security to the world. Pakistan desires a peaceful, stable and friendly Afghanistan. Indeed, “We cannot wish for Afghanistan anything that we don’t wish for Pakistan.”<sup>42</sup>

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## **EURASIAN GEOPOLITICS AND EMERGING TRENDS OF NAVAL AVIATION IN INDIAN OCEAN**

*Shehzad Masood Roomi*

### ***Abstract***

*Eurasian region and Indian Ocean have great strategic attraction owing to their geography, which combines them as a single pivot of global geopolitics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Historically, there has been a universal consensus among all the strategists, despite the difference in their approaches, that Eurasia and Indian Ocean are the key regions to extend the political influence at global level. Various land power and sea power theories were presented to achieve this goal but the rise of aerial warfare over sea i.e. naval aviation, has changed the modern approach of safeguarding and extending the political and military influence of a state in any region. Technological strides made in air-sea warfare, since the World War II, transformed the naval aviation into a credible strategic force over sea and land and an influential foreign policy as well. The US, being the most dominant global power, has been trying to extend its influence in the Eurasian region for many decades. The US naval aviation capabilities and future plans along with her foreign policy goals for the region are the primary driving force behind the naval power competition in the Indian Ocean. This paper examines the emerging trends of naval aviation in the context of prevailing geopolitics in the region with a focus on strategic importance of Indian Ocean and the Eurasian landmass. This analysis of balance of power of naval aviation in Indian Ocean is critical as it has far-reaching implication for all the littoral nations in the region, particularly for Pakistan, due to the Indian participation in this strategic competition as an American ally.*

### **Introduction**

Asia and Europe have a contiguous geography with diverse cultural values of East and West dividing this landmass in two separate continents. People, civilizations and cultures of both these continents have been



benefitting from the rich trade of Indian Ocean for last millennium. This trade enticed travellers from Europe to discover sea routes to Asian lands. During the colonial era, Indian Ocean once again played key role as European battleships began to emerge in Asian water ways. The American and Western industrial revolution during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the discovery of crude oil in the Middle East, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, further enhanced the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean. Eurasia is home of almost 5 billion people and the Indian Ocean plays a more important role for this huge population. With increasing population around Indian Ocean, the trade volume and new security challenges are also on the rise and so is the strategic competition among littoral nations and extra-regional players to protect respective geopolitical and geo-economic interests.

This body of water is more than 6,200 miles (10,000 km) wide between the southern tips of Africa and Australia and has an area of about 28,360,000 square miles (73,440,000 square km).<sup>1</sup> Many of the world's important seas are also part of the Indian Ocean. These seas not only connect the main body of water to the littoral nations of Southern Eurasia but some of the most critical choke points are also part of these smaller seas where 40% of global trade takes place. This makes its geography strategically more attractive for both regional and global players as well. Bab el Mandeb, Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca are three most important choke points and large part of trade to and from Indian Ocean and its seas to other oceans (Pacific and Atlantic) passes through these narrow sea ways. Narrow Strait of Hormuz is the main maritime link between oil rich Persian Gulf and the rest of the world. Similarly, the strategic significance of the Malacca was well established during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century when European navigators began to travel East and trade between East and West was initiated. In 1511, Tomé Pires described the importance of Malacca, "Whoever is lord of Malacca has his hand on the throat of Venice."<sup>2</sup> Today, one fourth of total global energy trade through sea takes place through Malacca strait and the volume of this trade is expected to increase with raised energy demands from India and China. As Kaplan notes, "China's demand for crude oil doubled from 1995 to

2005 and expected to get doubled again within next 15 years.”<sup>3</sup> Indian energy demands also show similar trend. The entire Indian energy import from the Middle East takes place primarily through the Indian Ocean.

Due to this dependence of global maritime trade on these choke points, the littoral nations situated around these choke points hold strategic importance due to their geography. For example, the regional stand-off between Iran and the US over Tehran’s nuclear programme has further complicated the regional geopolitical scenario as Iran has announced to block Strait of Hormuz after “European Union nations agreed on an oil embargo against Iran as part of sanctions over its nuclear programme.”<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Pakistan is located on the world map at a very strategic location, as its land routes and mountain passes are the gateways to the Central Asia from the Indian Ocean through landlocked Afghanistan. Similarly, Pakistan provides the shortest path connecting Western China to the oil rich Persian Gulf. The fact that Pakistani routes to Afghanistan for US/NATO supply line is yet another manifestation of importance of Pakistan’s geography.

Apart from these, Indo-China energy supply competition in the Indian Ocean is another critical factor impacting the regional stability. In order to pursue their long-term goals, both India and China are building up their maritime military power in the Indian Ocean where the US already maintains formidable power projection capabilities through forwardly deployed naval fleets.

### **Problem Statement**

In Post-World War II era, Eurasian region and Indian Ocean emerged as combined area of interest. Today, within a very fluid and subtle geopolitical environment, a strategic maritime competition is prevailing in the Indian Ocean. Enhancing the naval aviation capabilities is the focal point of every competitor’s maritime strategy. In order to comprehend the seaward aerial challenges for the regional stability and national security, it is critical to examine the emerging naval aviation trends and analyze the various factors shaping these trends.

### **Indian Ocean and Eurasia: Single Area of Interest**

Classical geopolitical analysts, Alfred Thayer Mahan and H. J. Mackinder, defined Eurasian landmass and Indian Ocean as two separate but critically important geographies to extend influence to other regions of the globe.

Mahan, a US naval strategist declared Indian Ocean a key for global dominance and “whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominated Asia. The ocean is the key to seven seas. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters.”<sup>5</sup>

Mackinder presented his theory of political geography which emphasized the significance of the Eurasian landmass. He stated, “Is not the pivot region of the world’s politics that vast area of Euro-Asia which is inaccessible to ships, but in antiquity lay open to the horse-riding nomads, and is today about to be covered with a network of railways?”<sup>6</sup>

Both Mahan and Mackinder also presented two contradictory approaches for extending political control over the Eurasian region.

Mahanian strategy considered sea power much more important and decisive in nature compared to the land power. According to this sea-power theory, irrespective of its power and strong organization, no land power would be able to withstand a prolonged naval blockade and would surrender eventually. The theory emphasized on building strong battleship and commercial fleets along with the ability to control important sea routes, naval bases, ports and choke points across the world. In order to establish a principle proof for his sea power approach, Mahan argued that “British control of the seas, combined with a corresponding decline in the naval strength of its major European rivals, paved the way for Great Britain’s emergence as the world’s dominant military, political, and economic power.”<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, Mackinder, while describing the Eurasian heartland (mainly the areas under the control of the Russian Empire

at that time) as the pivot of World Island, considered the land power more important in the Eurasian region than sea power due to its unique geography. He conceived,

“The Euro-Asia as a continuous land, ice-girt in the north, water-girt elsewhere, measuring 21 million square miles, or more than three times the area of North America, whose centre and north, measuring some 9 million square miles, or more than twice the area of Europe, have no available water-ways to the ocean, but, on the other hand, except in the subarctic forest, are very generally favourable to the mobility of horsemen and camel men.”<sup>8</sup>

### **Emergence of Naval Aviation**

Mackinder’s and Mahanian visions were put to test during the later years of the World War II. Technological advances in military aviation made aerial power the most decisive factor in many battles during the war. The role of Allied aerial firepower was so significant that German Field Marshal Rommel was compelled to state, “**Anyone who has to fight, even with the most modern weapons, against an enemy in complete control of the air, fights like a savage against a modern European army.**”<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, the impact of the control of skies over sea played a critical role in many naval battles in the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, which altered the course of the war. Aircraft carriers emerged as a prime naval asset to gain strategic results in the sea. During the war, major naval engagements against the enemy fleets were being made through aircraft because of their much greater ranges than the battleships’ guns. Allied inventions like radar, guided torpedoes, bombing sights, Catapult Aircraft Merchantmen (CAM) and Leigh Light changed the course of the sea battles. These innovations ensured fleet safety against the coastal defences by extending the range through aircraft. Aircraft carriers enabled Japanese Navy to use airplanes during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Later,

the US deployed aerial platforms during the 'Battle of Midway Atoll' in 1941-42. In fact, the later one is considered to be the most intense fleet battle in the Pacific theatre. The impact of this battle was so profound that "though the war had three more years to run, the Imperial Japanese Navy would never again initiate a strategic offensive"<sup>10</sup> after losing four of its primary carriers along with many destroyers in a single day. Superior aerial reconnaissance and firepower abilities made this victory possible for the US Navy. Till 1942, when German and Russian forces were vying for securing Russian heartland the future course of the World War II was being decided in Pacific and Atlantic Oceans where sea and air powers emerged as the most decisive force.

Mackinder's pivot theory, along with his land force approach, met with failure after unsuccessful German attempt to capture Moscow during the World War II. His work was challenged and countered by Spykman through his 'Rimland Theory' which basically was an update to Mackinder's original idea. In Rimland Theory, the geographical pivot of the global politics shifts from Russian heartland to what Mackinder had defined as 'inner crescent' which mainly consists on littoral nations. According to Spykman, "the heartland power would be immobilized by difficulties with internal lines of communication and lack of mobility to expand beyond the physical barriers along its borders."<sup>11</sup> So, any power which wants to control the heartland will have to dominate and control the Rimland as it would provide the control over both air and sea. In this way, he proved himself a critic and an advocate to both Mahan and Mackinder as well. Evidently, the air-sea battles during the World War II played significant role in articulation of Spykman's vision.

During the Cold War, both the US and Soviet Union were engaged in covert wars like attacking or coercing each other's allies and using proxies in active battlefields to engage each other in the war of attrition. Hence Spykman's vision was not tested till the First Gulf War in 1990's where geography of littoral nations played considerable role in operation Desert Storm in which, "critical to the success of all aviation missions was the role of electronic countermeasures, "jamming" or "defence suppression" aircraft."<sup>12</sup>

Though post-Cold War geopolitical scenario of the region was not predicted by Spykman, it, however, does correlate with Spykman's thinking. Spykman held that the nation that could maintain control of the Rimland could dominate the world political and economic order."<sup>13</sup>

Dismemberment of the Soviet Empire in 1988 allowed the US Navy to project power in Asian seas. It was observed that "the Indian Ocean has become an area of acute tension -- a peril zone with conventional and nuclear vessels of the major powers staging a permanent presence in the area."<sup>14</sup>

Prevailing geopolitical scenario is shaped by a number of factors like war on terror, US quest for political influence in Central Asian 'stans' and Asia Pacific region, growing Chinese economic and military strength, emerging Indian power, Indo-China energy security competition, social uproar in Middle East, Iran-US tensions over Iranian nuclear programme, North Korean nuclear crisis, Piracy around the coast of Somalia. Ironically enough, all these hotspots are located around the littoral nations of Indian Ocean. A bird's eye view at prevailing geopolitical map of the world is sufficient to prove that Spykman's Rimland, particularly the littoral nations of Middle East and South Asia, have been entombed in a complex geopolitical scenario with multiple possible outcomes depending upon various regional and global dynamics.

In this complex geopolitical environment, every major naval force in the Indian Ocean is trying to become a Mahanian sea power having strong battleship and merchant fleet, controlling water ways (Sea Line of communications) and controlling the critical choke points. But due to the permanence of air as the most dominant warfare arena, both over sea and land, no naval force would be able to meet these three critical objectives while ignoring the strategic value of developing naval aviation.

### **Modern Naval and Maritime Aviation**

Due to extensive technological strides during the last 65 years, naval aviation has emerged as the most critical component of national defence forces. Today, naval aviation undertakes a wide range of operations.

- **Anti-Surface Ship Warfare (ASU):** Detection, tracking, identification and destruction of the enemy surface vessels through anti-ship missiles, bombs, torpedoes and mines.
- **Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW):** Detection, tracking, identification and neutralizing the enemy submarines using air launched torpedoes and mines.
- **Command, Control, Communication, Computers, Intelligence (C<sup>4</sup>I):** Coordination of war efforts by providing a single command station to pass information and share intelligence among all the concerned unit commanders across the theatre of operation.
- **Airborne Early Warning (AEW):** Detection of enemy surface, air and land movement in the battlefield from a very long distance and passing near real time information to the command centre for further instructions. Specialized planes, equipped with long-range powerful radars and Electronic Support Measures (ESM) systems, perform AEW missions.
- **Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR):** Gathering, sorting, classifying and disseminating intelligence information about the enemy capabilities through advanced sensors.

“ISR systems range in size from hand-held devices to orbiting satellites. Some collect basic information for a wide range of analytical products; others are designed to acquire data for specific weapons systems.”<sup>15</sup>
- **Strike Warfare (STW):** Neutralizing the enemy battle or merchant ships, harbours, ports, shipbuilding dockyards, command and control centres (irrespective to its location in sea, air or land) and any other militarily important asset.

- **Electronic Warfare (EW):** One of the most profound force-multipliers in the modern warfare, which seeks to deny the access of electromagnetic spectrum to the enemy and control the spectrum for own forces. “Today’s weapon systems and support systems rely on radio, radar, infrared (IR), electro-optical, ultraviolet, and laser technologies to function in peace and war.”<sup>16</sup>
- **Close Air Support (CAS) in Amphibious Warfare (AMW):** Very similar to CAS role of any Air Force. Ship borne helicopters and carrier borne multirole fighters provide necessary cover to amphibious units to ensure their safe landing on enemy seashores.
- **Airlift/Transpiration/Logistic Support:** Moving troops and supplies to and from ships through helicopters and light transport aircraft.

It must be noted that some of the roles like C<sup>4</sup>I and ISR are sometimes performed by modern multi-mission C<sup>4</sup>ISR platforms. Similarly, modern Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPAs) often perform the ASU, ASW, STW and ISR operations depending upon the theatre of war and nature of threat.

### **Eurasian Geopolitics & Naval Aviation Trends**

Spykman thinking played a central role in the US policy of containing any emerging maritime power in the Rimland. As stated by the political scientist Robert S. Ross, “The United States is an East Asian maritime power with no strategic imperative to compete for influence on the mainland. And the status quo enables it to secure its balance of power interests and its interest in regional shipping lanes through a maritime containment strategy.”<sup>17</sup> However, in this new US containment strategy, critical focus is on the regional maritime partnerships and the naval aviation, which “is also adapting to a series of geopolitical revolutions which will dramatically increase the future demand for a secure sea base capable of projecting dominant power ashore in wartime against the full spectrum of possible opponent.”<sup>18</sup> This presents a more concise picture



of naval power projection by the United States in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean.

The US policy has spawned the most profound strategic maritime competition of contemporary history between the US and China. This competition is unfolding along the Pacific rim of Indian Ocean in the South China Sea but due to emergence of new strategic alliance (like Indo-US) almost all the littoral nations of the Indian Ocean are being affected. The US Secretary of State, announced last November that “the American influence in Asia is here to stay”<sup>19</sup> while describing the regional waters as “US pivot in Asia”.<sup>20</sup> These statements represent the US policy towards Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This also explains the planned prolonged stay in Afghanistan after 2014<sup>21</sup> as well.

### **The US-China Strategic Competition**

As mentioned earlier, Indians have a geographical advantage over China as well. Indian SLOCs from the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea are not as complicated as the Chinese sea routes are due to the ‘Malacca Dilemma’. The only major choke point for the Indians is Strait of Hormuz in the Gulf of Oman.

The US wants to maintain her maritime presence in the Chinese Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). China is resisting and also rapidly building its maritime power projection capabilities. This emergence of China is the harbinger of US-China strategic contest in the Indian Ocean particularly in South China Sea. Chinese naval ambitions challenge the American strategy in Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific region. Apart from this strategic US-China competition, there are other concerns for the US interests due to which the region is a critical one for the US like Iranian threats to block the Strait of Hormuz, North Korean nuclear programme, and exerting strong political influence in Afghanistan in the post-2014 scenario. Hence maintaining global maritime leadership is the end goal of the US strategy through various ways and means.

## **The American Strategy**

Over the years, the American strategists have proposed unchallenged American presence in the region as the most critical strategic factor. The idea was first described by the former National Security Advisor to President Carter, Zbigniew Brzezinski, in the following words, “It is imperative that no Eurasian challenger emerges capable of dominating Eurasia and thus of also challenging America.”<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Robert D. Kaplan considers it necessary for the US to remain unchallenged because it will give the US “a unique position that will give it the leverage to act as a broker between India and China in their own backyard.”<sup>23</sup> But, why Eurasia is such an important region for the US? The following quote by Brzezinski might be helpful in finding an answer:

“A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world’s three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa’s subordination, rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania geopolitically peripheral to the world’s central continent.”<sup>24</sup>

Keeping this in mind, the statement of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, during her visit to Australia in November 2012, succinctly expresses the American policy for the region. She announced, “We never actually left Asia. We’ve always been here and been a presence here. We consider ourselves a Pacific power. But in the 21st century it’s important that we make absolutely clear we are here to stay.”<sup>25</sup> But this American strategy is not very comforting for the regional stability. Larry Strange, Executive Director at Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI) observed,

“China is strengthening its influence of geopolitics in the region, which is an important reason for the United States to adjust its strategic focus. The United States must

be unrealistic if it hopes to use the strategy of returning to Asia-Pacific to curb China, but the intervention of the United States will make the regional economic and security relations complicated.”<sup>26</sup>

While the US is trying to take an assertive role, her maritime strategic objectives in the Indian Ocean are faced with various concerns and restraints. The numerical strength of the US Navy has receded considerably since the end of the Cold War era. The total number of surface ships in 1987 was 594, while in 2012 the USN’s surface fleet strength stands at 281.<sup>27</sup> Albeit, this numerical depletion of its surface fleet hasn’t prevented the US Navy to operate and project power in all the global geopolitical hotspots due to continuous technological advancements and high quality leadership. But irrespective of all its advanced technologies, numbers do matter in power projection capability. This has compelled the US to look for a maritime strategic partner in Indian Ocean as a means to meet her political ends. Due to historical tensions between India and Pakistan, this US-Chinese strategic maritime competition affects Pakistani interests and stability of the Arabian Sea as well. India is the largest arm importer in the world, and given the massive modernization of Indian Naval aviation, acquisition and introduction of new advanced weapon systems would disturb the conventional balance of power in Arabian Sea.

Quite a few USN projects have been delayed due to the economic strains as well; including a two-year delayed induction of Ohio-class SSBN.<sup>28</sup> But a noteworthy fact is that USN Aviation programmes remain intact which constitutes one of the potent components of the American Naval forces.

At present, the USN Aviation is the leading naval aviation wing, both in sophistication of weapons in its arsenal and numerical strength. There are more than 350 aerial platforms of all kinds in the 7<sup>th</sup> fleet, which operates in the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea.<sup>29</sup> The UAVs hold central focus in future programme of US naval aviation. Projects like Unmanned Combat Air System Demonstration (UCAS-D)

and Broad Area Maritime Surveillance (BAMS) are unparalleled in the world. UCAS-D is “to mature technologies for a carrier suitable, low observable relevant, unmanned air system capable of providing persistent, penetrating surveillance, and penetrating strike capability in high threat areas.”<sup>30</sup> BAMS, “As an adjunct to the P-8A, the BAMS UAS will provide combat information to operational and tactical users such as the Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG), Carrier Strike Group (CSG) and the Joint Forces Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC).”<sup>31</sup>

### **The Chinese Strategy**

Chinese are well aware of the US strategy of containment particularly in the South China Sea where US military assistance to Taiwan is a major Chinese concern. India, Japan and South Korea are already strategic allies of the US. For China, almost all Asian seas are important for the continuation of safe energy supplies from the Arabian Gulf to keep the ‘global manufacturing powerhouse’ running and not allowing the US led alliances to deter Chinese policy towards Taiwan. To cope with these challenges, Chinese are building People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) with blue water capabilities with special focus on air-sea battle capabilities.

The Chinese decision to acquire an aircraft carrier is also part of a long-term maritime strategy. Today, Chinese Navy is the second largest in the world with strength of 250,000 along with 56,000 strong PLA Naval Air Force, operating several hundred land-based aircraft and ship-based helicopters. But still China would not be able to meet the Western, particularly the American, maritime power projection capabilities anytime soon.

**PLAN Air Force Aircraft and Helicopters**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Surveillance	Y-8 MPA	6
Long-range maritime patrolling & ISR	-	
Training and flying conversion	JJ-6	14
	JL-8	12
	JL-9	12
AEW	Y-8 ELINT	2
	Z-8	26
	*Ka-31	10
Transport	Mi-8	8
Anti-submarine	SH-5	3
	*Ka-28	12
	*Z-9C	20
Air-defence, attack, anti-ship, strike	Su-30MKK2/33	23
	J-10	20
	J-11	24
	JH-7A	35
	J-7 D/E	30
	Q-5	30
	*SA365N	3
Strategic Bombers	H-6D	16
Utility	Y-5	
	H-6U (Tankers)	10

\* Helicopter

**Source:** Adam Baddeley, “The AMR Regional Air Force Directory 2012”, *Asian Military Review*, February/March 2012, P 25.

Chinese Navy lacks in many, areas particularly in ISR, EW, ASW capabilities and carrier-borne aerial operations. The entire air fleet of Chinese Navy is composed of land-based aircraft due to which a compromise on their range becomes inevitable disadvantage. This is why many military experts believe that the Chinese Navy, particularly its

aviation wing has a long way to go before being able to project strategic capabilities over regional seas. Nevertheless, the induction of long-range MPA, Y-8X (range 5,600 km) which is equipped with “American Litton AN/APS-504(V) 3 surface search radar”,<sup>32</sup> is a clear indication about the prevailing realization in PLAN about these strategic shortcomings.

### **Expected Future Induction of PLAN Air Force**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Status</b>
Anti-ship	*Z-9D Dauphin	Under development
Anti-Submarine	Y-8FQ/	2 prototypes built
AEW / AWACS	Y-7 based AWACS Y-8W/ KJ-200	1 prototype undergoing tests Delivered
MPA	Y-8X	Delivered

\* Helicopter

**Source:** Chinese Military Aviation<sup>33</sup>

### **Indian Maritime Strategy**

Foremost strategic Indian goal in the Indian Ocean is to ensure that her 7,516km long coastline, 12 major ports and 2 million square kilometre Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)<sup>34</sup> is secured and that is the only way for India to prosper as 90% of total Indian trade is sea-based and 65% of it comes from Arabian Gulf, Europe, Africa and the US which reaches Indian ports after passing through Western seas (Gulf, Red Sea and Arabian Sea). Some Indian maritime experts, as a policy goal, have suggested that “Indian Ocean, therefore, must remain India’s Ocean.”<sup>35</sup>

Apart from that, deterring the Chinese threat is the most critical element in Indian strategic thinking. China, according to Indian maritime defence experts, “is encircling India from Eastern Frontiers, i.e. through Myanmar coast, Northern Frontiers, i.e. through Tibet and the Western Frontiers i.e. through Pakistan.”<sup>36</sup> To this end, Indian Naval modernization and expansion programme envisages to build blue water Navy with the capability “to operate over 200 miles (320 kilometres)

from shore, in other words long range, deep water, oceanic maritime projection bringing with it sea power.”<sup>37</sup>

Indian naval aviation operates under 3-tier maritime patrolling strategy with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) forming innermost tier while outermost tier is formed by long-range maritime planes like Tu-142 Bear (soon to be replaced by P8-I).<sup>38</sup> Indian Naval Aviation inventory is being managed by force of 5,000 specially trained Indian naval aviation personnel. By 2020, Indian Navy wants to increase its carrier strength to 3.

#### **Strength of Indian Naval Aviation**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Surveillance	BN-2 Islander	5
Long-range maritime patrolling & ISR	Il-38SD May	5
Training and flying conversion	*HJT-16 Kiran	8
	*HPT-32 Deepak	8
	Harrier T4	2
	MiG-29KUB Fulcrum	4
AEW	*Ka-31 Helix	9
Transport	Do228-101/201	-
Anti-submarine	*Ka-28 Helix	10
	*Sea King Mk42	18
	Tu-142ME Bear	8
	*Dhruv	6
Air-defence, attack, anti-ship, strike	MiG-29K Fulcrum	7
	Sea Harrier FRS51	12
Utility	*SA316B Chetak	30
	*SA319B Chetak	25
	*Mi-2 Hoplite	2
	*Ka-25 Hormone	3

\* Helicopter

**Source:** Adam Baddeley, “The AMR regional Air Force Directory 2012”, *Asian Military Review*, February/March 2012, PP. 26-27.

Along with these naval aviation assets, the future acquisitions include an aircraft carrier from Russia along with Mig-29K carrier borne fighters which are regarded as “proverbial game changers”<sup>39</sup> by the Indian Navy due to armament carrying capacity, range and advanced sensor suits of this carrier borne multi-role fighter. For air superiority, it carries RVV-AE and R-73E air-to-air guided missiles. For strike and anti-ship missions, Mig-29K carries Kh-31A and Kh-35 sub-sonic cruise missiles with ranges of 110 km and 130 km respectively.<sup>40</sup> Both these weapons add deadly striking capability against surfaced ships from safe stand-off ranges.

For surveillance and reconnaissance, INS 342 Squadron was raised in 2006 and consists of Searcher and Heron UAV.<sup>41</sup> This was the first UAV squadron in Indian Navy. In April 2011, 3<sup>rd</sup> such squadron was raised in Indian Navy comprising IAI Searcher tactical UAVs and IAI Heron long-endurance UAVs.<sup>42</sup> As a large MALE (Medium Altitude, Long Endurance) UAV, it’s built to carry multiple payloads at a time for a variety of missions. Choices include electro-optical and thermal surveillance equipment, Synthetic Aperture Radars (SARs) for ground surveillance, maritime patrol radars and sensors, signals and other intelligence collection antennas and equipment, laser designators, and even radio relays.

To bolster her ISR and AEW capabilities, P-8I is the most advanced and sophisticated weapon system purchased by the Indian naval aviation in the recent times. It “is a long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft capable of broad-area, maritime and littoral operations.”<sup>43</sup> The plane is fitted with the latest sensor suites to detect and attack surface and subsurface targets. The upgraded APS-137D (V)5 maritime surveillance radar and signal intelligence (SIGINT) system developed by Raytheon<sup>44</sup> are among the sensors that help in tracking and identifying the target. Delivery of P-8I to the Indian Navy has begun since December 2012.



### **Future Maritime Aircraft and Helicopters of Indian Naval Aviation**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Delivery Expected</b>
Long-range maritime patrolling	P8-I	12	2012
Air-defence, attack, anti-ship, strike	Mig-29K Naval LCA	34 6	2012
AEW	*Ka-31 Helix	5	-
Training	Hawk 132	17	2012

\* Helicopter

**Source:** Adam Baddeley, “The AMR regional Air Force Directory 2012”, *Asian Military Review*, February/March 2012, PP. 26-27.

Apart from these acquisitions, Indian strategic manoeuvring in the Indian Ocean like building ports in Iran and connecting it to Afghanistan indicates that Indian strategy of extending influence is not limited to the Indian Ocean only. Afghanistan and Central Asia are also among Indian areas of interests. With this kind of turbulence and militarization of the region, “ensuring good order at sea poses a daunting challenge to existing maritime security forces. In fact, many coastal navies focus on policing roles and the security of littorals.”<sup>45</sup>

### **Naval Aviation Trends: Implication for Regional Stability**

To assess the long-term implications of this naval aviation competition in the Indian Ocean, the above analysis can be summarized as following:-

- As a matter of critical political geography, Spykman’s thinking would prevail in foreseeable future.
- As a matter of strategy in this political geography, Mahanian vision would continue to prevail with only one addition. i.e. Maritime aviation as an integral part of naval power.

- The delicate nature of regional geopolitics would continue to prevail with Indian Ocean becoming more militarized.
- The US would continue to play an important role in shaping and driving regional geopolitics through her diplomacy and maritime power projection as an instrument of foreign policy.
- China and India will emerge as strong contenders in naval aviation competition.
- There would be more aircraft carriers, belonging to competing navies, with strike and ISR/AEW platforms as main assets.

### **Implications for National Security**

The emerging trends of naval aviation in Indian Ocean cannot be ignored in a complex geopolitical milieu where most of the regional security dynamics are being shaped by extra regional forces and the strategic competition among global players in neighbouring region. Prevailing US-Iran tensions, piracy and growing Indian maritime aviation pose challenges for Pakistan and its maritime security. Indo-China arms race in the region also affecting balance of power between Pakistani and Indian naval aviation wing. India plans to have a 165-ship fleet by 2022, consisting of surface combatants, submarines and three aircraft carrier groups with a total of 400 MiG-29K aircraft and helicopters.<sup>46</sup>

As part of its active-defence doctrine, Pakistan maintains a dedicated Naval Aviation arm along with maritime aviation support from Pakistan Air Force. Formed in 1970, PN air arm operates just 5 smaller ASW squadrons constituted both by aircraft and helicopters of western and American origins for anti-ship, anti-submarine, surveillance and transport missions. In 2007, PN began induction of “seven upgraded ex-US Navy P-3Cs Orion aircraft and ordered the upgradation of two Pakistan Navy aircraft. The upgrade includes Inverse Synthetic Aperture Radar (ISAR/SAR), Electronic Support Measures (ESM) and communication systems.”<sup>47</sup> But despite their upgradation in sensor suits, PN’s P3Cs would be inferior in operational capabilities to Indian Navy’s future MPA, i.e.

P-8I. Indian Air Force and Indian Navy's fighter jets would remain a serious challenge to Pakistani MPAs and maritime helicopters.

With more powerful players emerging in the region, Pakistan's geography is its biggest strength but it could become its biggest weakness as well if not protected from both internal and external threats. Ensuring the qualitative competitiveness of Pakistan Navy's air arm is unarguably the most critical challenge right now but there are some other issues which have become Achilles' heel of PN in recent times.

- **Physical security:** Deadly terrorist attack on PNS Mehran, in which PN lost two of its P3-Cs, put a big question mark on the measures taken by the PN to secure its installations like a Naval Aviation base. Destruction of two P3-C Orion aircraft was the most severe blow to PN. The impact of this terrorist attack can only be equated with war-time attrition. This attack indicates mounting non-kinetic internal threat against PN.
- **Dependence on Pakistan Air Force for Maritime Strike Role Missions:** The No. 8 Tactical Attack Squadron is the only squadron in the PAF that provides maritime support missions to the Pakistan Navy.<sup>48</sup> Keeping insight the growing strength of Indian naval air arm, it is critically important for Pakistan Navy to raise new naval aviation squadrons to cater future threats like Mig-29K and other planned Indian acquisitions.
- **Absence of Naval Fighter or Aircraft for Escort Role:** Maritime escort becomes the most critical role when the safety of high value multi-mission naval aviation aircraft is in question. Destruction of PN's Breguet Atlantique on 10 August 1999 by two IAF's Mig-21s caused PN not only a MPA platform but also 16 lives of crew members onboard.<sup>49</sup> Had Pakistan Navy an escort squadron available the ill-fated plane would have been saved along with precious lives of brave men of Pakistan Navy. The fact that the PN has not raised any escort squadron, constituted by multirole fighters, even after 13 years of dreadful tragedy of Breguet

Atlantique, enhances the probability that Indian Air Force might seek another opportunity to repeat the successful downing of an unarmed Pakistani plane.

- **Absence of Fleet Defence Surface Vessels:** Considering the planned expansion in the Indian naval air arm, it would be prudent to assume that Pakistan Navy's fleet-level SAM capabilities need an urgent upgradation. Indian Naval aviation aircraft armed with long range anti-ship cruise missiles (like Kh-31) would pose a serious airborne challenge to Pakistan Navy's surface fleet.
- **Lack of AWACS Platform for Pakistan Navy:** Current fleet of PN air arm consists of multi-mission platforms capable of performing multiple maritime tasks. But there is no dedicated AEW/AWACS platform in the inventory that could detect and warn from a long distance about the airborne threats approaching towards Pakistani waters.

Operational readiness of national armed forces demands the tactical and strategic analysis of capabilities of perceived enemy. They are not related to the apparent stance of any party, which can be changed any time. Incidents like Mumbai 26/11 and Salala attack have shown that how quickly political equation, in this volatile region, could change from peaceful coexistence to the hostilities.

64 years ago, Quaid-e-Azam forewarned about the consequences a nation would face if it ignores the importance of aerial power. He said, in his address to the young officers of PAF Flying Training School, Resalpur, "A country without a strong air force is at the mercy of an aggressor. Pakistan must build up her Air Force as quickly as possible. It must be an efficient Air Force, second to none".<sup>50</sup> Unarguably, this is pertinently true for every branch of aviation especially for Pakistan naval aviation, irrespective of the defensive or offensive nature of our defence policy. Traditional threats as well as emerging security challenges, like piracy and Non-State Violent Actors (NSVAs), demand that Pakistan needs robust naval aviation arm to respond to any emergency or crisis within shortest

time. Pakistan needs to constantly re-evaluate her maritime aviation strength not just to fight off our traditional rival in Arabian Sea but to project conventional capabilities as part of national deterrence and diplomacy. Adjustment in the allocation of funds and long-term military acquisition plans must reflect improved balance of naval aviation power to ensure the regional stability and national security.

## **Conclusion**

Converging and diverging political and geo-economic interests of various countries in Eurasia are the harbinger of strategic power competition in the Indian Ocean. In pursuance of their respective interests, major global players have indulged in a strategic competition in the Indian Ocean region. This strategic competition originates from Asia Pacific region but it has implications for countries like Pakistan as well. Contiguous geography of regional competitors with historic conflicts and border disputes is a critical parameter in the regional security equation.

Since the World War II, naval aviation has emerged as the potent strategic force over sea and air. Major maritime players involved in strategic competition in the Indian Ocean are modernizing their aviation arms. Indian air power, both over land and sea, along with strong political will to extend the influence of Indian Navy beyond Indian precincts, poses serious challenges to Pakistan's national security. In order to ensure the maritime security and stability in the Arabian Sea, Pakistan must carry out strategic appraisal of existing naval aviation balance of power and synergize Pakistan Naval Aviation with other sister forces. Pakistan is a critical geography and one of four nuclear states operating in the Arabian Sea and hence has a critical role to play in the stability of the region. This task demands a robust, strategically capable naval aviation force as part of national deterrence against traditional and emerging threats.

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## **HOW PAKISTAN NEGOTIATES WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA?**

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### ***Abstract***

*Irrespective of their size and power potential, countries engage with each other. The basic motivation to interact stems from the countries' national interests. The fundamental tenet of diplomacy is negotiations. Breakdown in communication can be fatal in international relations. Within an asymmetrical relationship Pakistan and the United States have negotiated with each other, whenever their interests have conflated. The course of this relationship has never been smooth. It has had its ups and downs. It recently experienced the worst kind of impasse. It took patience and persuasion to find a way out of the logjam. Historically Pakistan and the US have partnered with each other on a number of times in the past but each union ended when the latter felt that the usefulness of the association had outlived its utility.*

### **Introduction**

A look at the Pakistan's existing negotiation strategy indicates that it accords top priority to the United States of America. It sends its best and brightest to its embassy in Washington and its top leadership makes it a point to visit the US at the earliest possible opportunity. There are excellent contacts at military-to-military level and there has been good intelligence cooperation. The Pakistani diplomats understand the working on the Capitol Hill and cultural barriers present no problems to them. Yet the current crisis has been difficult to resolve.

How can future showdowns, with predictable results be avoided? The best way forward is to rebuild the relationship on the basis of confidence and trust. No aspect of any transaction should be hidden in any manner



from the public view. It should be an issue-based engagement and not across the board strategic partnership. To animate such a track, common ground will have to be found. No matter how bleak the situation may appear there will always be zones of mutual interest e.g. one area, which is of mutual importance, is peace and stability in the region. Last but not least, Pakistan should look beyond the American departure from Afghanistan and prepare its approach to match the emerging situation. If Pakistan is able to learn from past experiences, it can surely recalibrate its negotiation strategies and steer clear of potential blind alleys.

### **Why Countries Negotiate?**

To rephrase John Donne, 16th century English poet, “No country is an island unto itself.”<sup>1</sup> For their own good, countries engage with each other, regionally as well as internationally. Interestingly culture and ideology form no obstacles in international relations. Countries cut across physical and mental barriers to communicate. The primary tool for engagement in statecraft, whether in peace or war, is negotiation and dialogue. National interests dictate and influence the outcome of interstate talks. The scope of negotiations can be bilateral as well as multilateral. Negotiations can take place within an institutional setting as well as in an informal manner. Negotiating partners can include two or more countries. Countries also negotiate with international bodies and non-government organizations. International parleys cover a wide spectrum of issues like defusing crises, preventing or ending wars, fostering trade and commerce, promoting bilateral relations, entering into alliances and also getting out of them, and a number of other mutually beneficial activities. What eventually matters are the results. The outcome of dialogues can have short-, medium- as well as long-term implications and can have a lasting effect on the destiny of nations.

Successful negotiations often conclude with joint statements, declarations, treaties, pacts, agreements, alliances, covenants and compacts. At times the negotiations are held in full glare of public view, while on other occasions these are extremely low key affairs or even

completely secret. The agreements that result from covert transactions may not be made available to the public domain for decades. One infamous secret agreement was the Sykes Picot Accord. This dubious understanding between the British and French imperialists was meant to create their zones of influence within the resource-rich Middle East. This was to be done by carving out multiple countries from the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War.<sup>2</sup>

It is not uncommon for two unequal countries to negotiate. It is fair to assume that the stronger party is in a position to dictate terms. During the early days of Islam, the Muslims of Medina entered into a peace treaty with the Quraish of Makkah. *Prima facie* the terms and conditions of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah appeared favourable for the Meccans.<sup>3</sup> In the long run, it proved to be a strategic masterstroke by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). For it provided the Muslims the necessary breathing space to convert more people to their cause and build up on their gains. After a decade of meaningful peace and progress the Muslims emerged as the strongest of the two city states and were successful in taking Makkah without any bloodshed. Treaties can be unduly harsh, especially when victors have dictated unfair terms to hapless losers. One historical example is that of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles. Under this treaty a defeated Germany was condemned to pay war reparations into perpetuity.

Negotiations resulting in formal treaties or informal agreements can sometime become subject of longstanding controversies. National leaders striking unpopular deals are criticised and castigated for their lack of statesmanship. Members of opposition capitalise on such occasions to heighten the sense of betrayal to build up public opinion against the ruling party or its leader. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's effort to strike a peace deal with Adolph Hitler in a bid to forestall the Second World War was dubbed as the policy of appeasement.<sup>4</sup> One of the most vociferous opponents of Chamberlain's policy, Winston Churchill described it as a sure shot recipe for encouraging dictators to wage war.<sup>5</sup> Churchill was able to replace the disgraced Chamberlain as the wartime Prime Minister of Great Britain.

A similar strategy was played by Mr Bhutto, as foreign minister of Pakistan to unseat President Ayub Khan. He rejected the Tashkent Agreement of 1966 because in his opinion Ayub Khan had “betrayed” Pakistan “by abandoning its just claim on Kashmir.”<sup>6</sup> He made this argument the rallying cry of his successful mass movement to remove Ayub Khan from power. There were dissenting voices in India against Tashkent as well. Speaking before the Rajiya Sabha, the upper house on 31 July 1966 veteran Indian politician L K Advani declared that the agreement was the betrayal of the entire nation. He was not alone in his tirade against the Tashkent Agreement. Five opposition parties, namely the Jana Sangh, CPM, Swatantra, Socialist and Congress (O) supported him.<sup>7</sup> There was, however, no mass agitation in India, since Prime Minister Lal Bahadar Shastri had died even before the ink had dried on the document signed by him. Indira Gandhi, the scion of the Nehru family, then a junior minister stepped into Shastri’s shoes without any fuss.

To put it succinctly, negotiations with foreign interlocutors can have domestic fallouts. This can happen if there are covert clauses or even if there aren’t any but the opposition parties can somehow create such an impression among the common people.

### **Negotiating Strategies and Stratagems**

Each state devises its own distinctive negotiation strategy to suit a peculiar environment. The plan of negotiations is based on an amalgam of factors. The first and foremost aspect to consider, while crafting a bargaining ploy, is the country’s national interests. From this should flow a smart plan to achieve the best result. Irrespective of what views a country may traditionally subscribe to, its negotiating strategy is invariably aimed to get the best out of the prevailing conditions. As the negotiations proceed the countries involved modify their tactics to arrive at the best possible outcome. The success of the negotiations depends on the genuine desire of both parties to effect a win-win situation. This, however, is an elusive commodity. At times negotiations completely fail

or only partly succeed. As in confrontation, so too in negotiations, the country that pulls the best punches, ends up with the top honours. It goes without saying that the size and power potential of a country is brought to bear to draw the best possible results.

Logically speaking, a stronger country should be under no compulsion to engage with a weaker one but this is not always the case in international affairs. Countries, irrespective of the sizes of their economies and military might, can come together, when their interests intersect and converge. Notwithstanding the commonalities created by fate or circumstances, it is always a challenge for the weaker nation within an unequal equation to put across its point of view in a manner that the more powerful party sees it in a positive light and wholly or partially accepts it. This is not to say that at times a country at a disadvantage can make the best of a bad bargain. For instance Mr Bhutto was clearly at a disadvantage while negotiating with Mrs Gandhi at Shimla, after Pakistan had lost its eastern wing as a result of the disastrous war in 1971. As a result of the agreement, India agreed to release the 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war and also vacate the areas it had occupied in West Pakistan. The concession that Bhutto made, was to convert the Ceasefire Line (CFL) into a Line of Control (LoC). The tacit understanding was to convert the LoC into international border within a span of 3 to 5 years after creating suitable public opinion in Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> To date the LoC remains a dividing line in a disputed territory.

For serious students of diplomacy, the negotiating strategies of weaker nations often appear paradoxical and enigmatic. The puzzle is how a weaker party can ever hope to succeed at the negotiating table and why at all stronger nations think of negotiating with them in the first place?<sup>9</sup> For instance, the attitude of Israel with the US often defies common sense. Israel, a junior partner in a strategic partnership of longstanding with the United States of America is often at odds with its senior partner. Its defiance in establishing new settlements in the occupied zones is a case in point. Many reasons can be ascribed to Israel's cocky behaviour. The general view held by the common man

in our parts of the world is that the confidence and exuberance that the puny state of Israel displays is because Jews control not only the bulk of the international capital but also the international media. The main reason is different. In my point of view the US tolerates the shenanigans of Israel because it serves as the world's sole superpower's strategic outpost in an oil rich zone – a region which must be tightly controlled as long as fossil fuel is used to run the factories and heat the homes of the rich and powerful industrialised nations.

### **Nature of Pakistan US Relationship**

Clearly Pakistan has an asymmetrical relationship with the US in which the decks are stacked against the former. This becomes quite evident in the course of their negotiations. Pakistan doesn't enjoy the kind of impunity that Israel displays, when negotiating with the US. Traditionally its relationship trajectory with the US has run an erratic course. There have been highpoints and lows. More often than not, Pak-US relations have blossomed and withered in short spurts usually ending in what has best been described as a bitter divorce after a steamy courtship and honeymoon. The major disagreement this time over has been Afghanistan.<sup>10</sup>

Like any other pragmatic practitioner of foreign affairs, the US engagement and disengagement with Pakistan has always been based on cold and calculated geopolitical assessments. Pakistan has almost always found it convenient to highlight its geostrategic location. Over the years, it has not been able to make any meaningful value addition to its salience as a major regional hub. As a result the US has repeatedly lost interest and unceremoniously ditched Pakistan. Pakistan's reaction to these rejections has been one of unqualified betrayal. This approach has marred meaningful attempts at deliberate soul searching and learning pertinent lessons. In this essay, I have made a modest effort to study the nature of Pakistan's negotiating practices with the US.

### **Why Pakistan and USA Negotiate?**

Over the past 65 years Pakistan-US relations have waxed and waned with the change in regional and international milieu. The rollercoaster nature of their association has caused enormous frustration and anxiety on both sides.<sup>11</sup> Much of the blame for this dissatisfaction can be laid on the differing expectations of both parties. Ever since its inception, Pakistan has felt threatened by its larger eastern neighbour India. There are many reasons for this threat factor. The primary reason for India-Pakistan animus is the disputed territory of Jammu & Kashmir. In the Pakistani narrative the first Prime Minister of India Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru exploited his relations with the last Viceroy of India Lord Louis Mountbatten and his wife Edwina to unfairly manipulate the Radcliffe boundary commission award. The final draft, revealed after the two countries had already become independent, made it possible for India to maintain a land route with Kashmir. This allowed the Indian forces to rush reinforcements and rescue the beleaguered State Forces from the clutches of the advancing Pakistani tribesmen. Disputes over division of assets, stoppage of river waters and forcible occupation of states like Junagarh and Manavadar, which had chosen to accede to Pakistan, has put the new relations on a rocky path.<sup>12</sup> India's role in separating East from West Pakistan,<sup>13</sup> and the surreptitious occupation of the Siachin glacier has served to add to the general feeling of mistrust. Pakistan and India are both nuclear states and can use these weapons in case a crisis gets out of hand.<sup>14</sup>

The role of Pakistan's western neighbour – Afghanistan — has also been problematic. At the time of partition of the Indian Subcontinent, the Afghan leadership rejected the Durand Line, the *de facto* border that divided British India from Afghanistan and laid irredentist claims on the province then called the North West Frontier Province (NWFP).<sup>15</sup> In order to survive in a tough neighbourhood Pakistan desperately sought allies. It was able to find protection in the military alliances with the United States during the Cold War. The Americans found it convenient to provide military aid to Pakistan to bolster its ring of

containment around the growing communist menace. The interests of the two countries conflated. Both were confronted with clear and present danger. One was operating at the global level, while the other was merely a minor regional player.

Pakistan has all along emphasised its important geographical location as the underpinning of its relationship with the United States. Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan in an interview given to Margret Bourke-White on the eve of Partition, confidently asserted that “America needs Pakistan more than Pakistan needs America.”<sup>16</sup> After the Second World War the United States had emerged as the most powerful nation on the earth. Although the Soviet Union would soon emerge as the second centre in a newly emerging bipolar world, USA, extremely rich, was a leader in technology, possessed nuclear weapons and its landmass was protected by the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. At the outset Pakistani leaders had sent out signals that they would steer clear of great power conflicts,<sup>17</sup> and would follow a “foreign policy...of friendliness and goodwill towards all nations of the world.”<sup>18</sup> However, it was quite clear that they were looking for partners. Jinnah, the realist, had stated in 1946, a year before independence: “Naturally no nation stands by itself. There will be alliances with other nations whose interests are common.”<sup>19</sup> After independence, statements by the country’s first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan led the domestic and foreign press to believe that Pakistani foreign policy would be one “of greater cooperation with the Anglo-American bloc,”<sup>20</sup> and that in case of war, while “India would remain neutral, Pakistan would side with the free countries against Russia.”<sup>21</sup> In a press conference in Cairo in May 1949, Liaquat Ali Khan said that “Pakistan was making a socialistic experiment which would help combat Communist penetration in South-East Asia.”<sup>22</sup> In an interview to the Cairo correspondent of *The Times*, Liaquat Ali had highlighted the importance of the Muslim countries between Cairo and Karachi and their possible role in fighting Communism and the need for the Western powers to strengthen them.<sup>23</sup>

## **How Pakistan Negotiates with the US?**

Taking into cognizance the USA's pre-eminent position in the world affairs, Pakistani policymakers have tried their best to negotiate with the Americans in a manner that they think best. A number of steps undertaken in this regard, over the years, would confirm the seriousness that Pakistan attaches to its relations with the US.

### **State Visits by Senior Leadership**

Beginning with Pakistan's first Prime Minister Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan there has hardly been a head of state or government, who has not visited the United States of America. Liaquat Ali Khan visited the US in May 1950. This was the first ever state visit to the US by a Pakistani head of the government. The US had extended the invitation to the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru first. The Pakistani prime minister was invited only after the Soviets sent him an invitation.<sup>24</sup> The reluctant manner of the invitation notwithstanding, Liaquat Ali Khan was accorded a warm and wholehearted reception by his hosts. He was received personally on arrival at the Washington National Airport by President Harry S. Truman. An honour guard was part of the reception festivities. From the airport the American President and his wife accompanied the Pakistani first family to their living quarters in Blair House. Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan addressed the United States House of Representatives, a rare honour given to any foreign dignitary. While in Washington, he visited the Mount Vernon residence of George Washington. In New York City another parade was held in his honour and he was awarded an honorary degree by the President of the Colombia University Dwight D. Eisenhower. Mrs Liaquat Ali Khan was conferred an honorary degree at the University of Kansas City. Liaquat Ali Khan was shown around the Lockheed Martin factory, a chemical plant and a supermarket.<sup>25</sup> The visit laid the Pakistan-United States relations on a firm foundation.

Depending upon the warmth in relationship the visiting Pakistani dignitaries have been given high-key or low-key reception. This hasn't



dampened the desire of the Pakistani leadership to visit the United States. Depending upon their charisma and status in the world affairs Pakistani leaders have tried to gain the maximum advantage from their visits to the US. Quite naturally they consider good relations with the United States to be in their country's interest. The American responses have been in line with their international aspirations. The last time President Asif Ali Zardari visited the United States was in May this year, almost 62 years after Liaquat Ali Khan's famous tour. He met the American President Mr Obama for a photo-op on the sidelines of the NATO conference held in Chicago, where he was pointedly given a cold shoulder.<sup>26</sup>

### **Quality of its Envoys**

Traditionally the most trusted aides and advisors have been sent as emissaries to foreign courts to negotiate on behalf of their suzerain. Axiomatically, therefore, countries set a lot of store on the intellectual and physical capabilities of their ambassadors and plenipotentiaries. Above all they must be convincing, eloquent, articulate and convincing. Under no circumstances should they be lacking in social graces. Besides, they should have the charisma and charm to make friends and recruit willing adherents to their country's cause. The more important a country, the more rigorous are the standards of selecting a diplomat. Of course, there are other considerations as well. Both military and civil administrations have chosen ambassadors, who they thought would serve the interests of their government best. It is, therefore, not unusual to find more non-career diplomats as Pakistani ambassadors in Washington, D.C., than perhaps any other international capital. It is not that a regular foreign officer/official, working his or her way up the ladder, is any way less hardworking or capable than a person picked from outside the diplomatic community. I suppose the tendency to frequently choose a top diplomat in Washington from the non-diplomatic stream depends, among other things, on the level of trust and confidence that he or she enjoys at home and the country of their accreditation.

The first envoy sent by the founder of Pakistan M.A. Jinnah to the US was his "close associate" Mirza Abol Hassan Ispahani.<sup>27</sup> The mandate

given to Ispahani, a businessman of good standing, was to create a favourable environment for the, yet to be born, state of Pakistan in the United States. A natural diplomat, Ispahani did a good job and was subsequently confirmed as Pakistan's first ambassador to Washington. Another businessman, who has been Pakistan's ambassador to the US and to a number of other countries, is Jamsheed K.A. Marker. Marker, a Zoroastrian, was Pakistan's ambassador during the critical period covering the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.<sup>28</sup> Besides these two gentlemen from the business community, a number of politicians, bureaucrats, generals and career diplomats have served as Pakistan's ambassador to the United States. Among the politicians serving as the Pakistani ambassador in Washington one name that was most prominent during the early days was Muhammad Ali Bogra. Hailing from East Pakistan, Bogra twice served as Pakistan's ambassador. In the interim he was Pakistan's Prime Minister. After he was removed from the office of the PM, he chose to return to the embassy in Washington. Bogra was known to be especially close to the Americans — a trait, considered both an added strength, as well one which at times raises eyebrows back home.

A long line of generals became Pakistan's ambassadors to the United States. This tradition became more discernible during periods of martial law. This list includes two services chiefs, namely Air Chief Marshal Zulfikar Ali Khan and General Jahangir Karamat. The former was Benazir Bhutto's pick of during her first term. Other generals/ambassadors were N.A.M Raza, Ejaz Azim and Mahmood Ali Durrani. One general, much acclaimed for his diplomatic skills, is Sahibzada Yakub Khan. The Sahibzada, a former lieutenant general belongs to the royal house of Rampur. He is a multi-lingual and served in Paris as well as Washington. He was made the foreign minister by General Ziaul Haq after the departure of Agha Shahi.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly enough, another choice of Pakistani ambassadors to the US has been journalists. Perhaps the government wanted to capitalise on their PR skills. Prominent among them have been Maleeha Lodhi, Hussain Haqqani and the current ambassador Sherry Rahman. Rahman's nomination as the ambassador was based on her close links to the ruling Pakistan People's Party. She

had been information minister before she chose to resign on personal grounds.<sup>30</sup> Washington is one major capital, where Pakistan has sent more than its share of women ambassadors. Abida Hussain was Nawaz Sharif's choice as an ambassador and Maleeha Lodhi was Pakistani ambassador to the US under two different presidents from 1994-1997 and then during 1999-2002. In the process she became Pakistan's longest ever serving ambassador to the US. She was Islamabad's representative in Washington, D.C., during the testing days of 9/11 incident.

A number of outstanding career diplomats have also had the honour of serving as their country's ambassador to Washington. In recent times Najmuddin Sheikh and Ashraf Jahangir Qazi have been part of this elite group. Riaz Khokhar, who later became the foreign secretary, is credited with taking up Pakistan's case of the F-16 Fighting Falcons to a US court, in his capacity as the ambassador, and winning compensation for non-delivery of the aircraft.<sup>31</sup>

### **Understanding the American Political System**

The American democracy is geared towards the inevitable campaign to get re-elected. All Congressmen/women and the president have their eyes focussed on the elections or re-elections. This means all their policies and plans are influenced by how they feel the voters will assess them in four years time. This has stark implications for countries, wanting to have long-term relations with the US. In the words of the late President Ziaul Haq: "Being friends with America is like living on the banks of a great river. Every four years it changes course, and leaves you either flooded or high and dry."<sup>32</sup> Diplomats manning the embassy in Washington are well trained to handle the dynamics of change. They have been inducted into service after a strenuous elimination process. The young men and women opting for the Foreign Service Cadre undergo several training courses at home and abroad to hone their diplomatic skills. They are aware of how the wheels of the American government function. Over the past 60 years, Pakistani functionaries have gained a good insight into the working at the Capitol Hill. Based on their experiences of interacting with the Americans,

the Foreign Affairs mandarins and the Washington-based diplomats brief the visiting dignitaries of what to expect from the officials at the State Department and other organs and institutions of the US Government. There cultural differences in the negotiating styles of the Americans as compared to how business is done in Pakistan are no longer a serious issue. Pakistanis understand that Americans do not go out of their way to entertain foreign guests and that they come straight to business without wasting time over tea and pleasantries. They also know that there are no free lunches in the United States. The role of the Congress in framing laws is well known. The importance of the lobbyists is also understood.

Expatriate Pakistanis complement the efforts of the diplomats in influencing their Congressmen and women, where they can legislate in favour of Pakistan. They create space within the political system by participating in fundraising events during the election campaigns for the office of the President, Senate and the House of Representatives. They are also active in local politics. Although their clout cannot match that of the ubiquitous Non-Resident Indians (NRI's), they have been instrumental in founding the Congressional Pakistan Caucus in 2004. The creation of the Pakistan Caucus has been a landmark event in the community's history and a milestone for US-Pakistan relations. The caucus is a bipartisan group that meets to pursue common legislative objectives. It promotes positive legislation affecting the Pakistani American community and a mutually beneficial and strong US-Pakistan relationship. The Pakistan Caucus also hold briefings on important issues affecting the Pakistani-American community and the US-Pakistan relationship seeking to educate members and staffers in a way that is unbiased, useful and accurate. Members of the Caucus may also push for official hearings, which serve to create an official record of expert testimony in anticipation of legislation.<sup>33</sup>

### **Military-to-Military Contacts and Intelligence Cooperation**

The military-to-military contacts and the cooperation among the intelligence agencies of the two countries has over the years been close

and abiding. Soon after independence Pakistan entered into a number of military alliances with the United States. The US not only provided Pakistan with necessary military wherewithal to build up its armed forces, it also participated in improving its infrastructure. Kharian cantonment was constructed by the US Army Corps of Engineers.<sup>34</sup> Beginning early 1950s through 1965, Pakistan got the latest state of the art tanks, armoured personnel carriers, self-propelled artillery guns, aircraft and warships as part of the US military aid programme.<sup>35</sup> Barring a few years, when Pakistan was under military sanctions, Pakistani officers regularly attended training courses in the US. American generals claim that they have been able to bond quickly with their Pakistani counterparts. In fact they have been able to mobilise their links within the Pakistani military, where the civilian counterparts have been stonewalled. Over the years the Pakistan military has adopted the jargon and practices of the US armed forces. The frequency of exchange of visits by the top military leadership shows a very reassuring pattern. Although the US-Pakistan military relationship has become frayed recently because of claims that it is not doing enough to stop the activities of Taliban, particularly the Haqqani Group from stopping their operations against the Afghan government and the NATO/ISAF troops, Pakistan officially remains a major non-NATO ally.

The CIA and ISI came really close during the years of the Afghan jihad in the 1980s. The DG ISI frequently visits the US.<sup>36</sup> The director CIA is also in Islamabad, whenever he feels a personal visit would yield positive results. Currently the relations are experiencing a downswing and the Americans have openly taken to accusing the ISI for supporting the Taliban. The former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Admiral Mike Mullen went on record by declaring that the Haqqani Group is the veritable arm of the ISI.<sup>37</sup> This mudslinging has not gone down well with the Pakistanis.

### **What Went Wrong?**

The Americans haven't been particularly successful in Afghanistan. Despite claims of having weakened the militants, the death toll keeps

mounting on a daily basis. It has been a long-drawn war, the longest in American history. The results do not match the expenditure in terms of human blood and treasure spent. After a fruitless war, the Americans have announced a military drawdown, to be completed by the end of 2014. They, however, intend maintaining a military footprint in Afghanistan in terms of trainers and advisors. The impasse in relations was the result of frustration for not having been able to achieve the stated political objectives i.e. defeating Al Qaeda. Even the watered down aims of disrupting and dismantling the terrorist organisation seem to be in doldrums.<sup>38</sup> The blame for not being able to stop violence in Afghanistan has been passed on to Pakistan. It has been alleged that Pakistan is providing sanctuary and safe havens for those carrying out cross border terrorism. The Americans believe this has official sanction.<sup>39</sup> The think-tankers are regularly painting doomsday scenarios and dismissing the country as a failed or dysfunctional state.<sup>40</sup> For Pakistan the most hurtful issue is that the Americans are not willing to entertain its legitimate security concerns. One serious issue that has aggravated the domestic security situation are the drone strikes in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). These have significantly increased after Barack Obama became the President of the US. The sense in Pakistan is that such remote attacks cause the deaths of innocent citizens and result in retaliatory strikes by militants in settled areas. Specific incidents that have soured relations include the case of Raymond Davis, a CIA contractor, who shot and killed two Pakistani men in Lahore. The Americans handled it roughshod amply reflecting their instinctive hubris and arrogance, while dealing with Pakistan. Davis was briefly incarcerated before being set free because the Americans were claiming diplomatic immunity. An ugly feature of the Davis case was the payment of blood money to the kin of the dead youth. The poor relatives settled for what they considered was the best deal from a sordid and sad affair. Then came the Osama bin Laden raid by US Navy SEALs in Abbottabad. The Americans chose not to share their plans with their Pakistani counterparts. They simply didn't trust them. For Pakistanis the intrusion into their territory to carry out the raid on Osama bin Laden's compound was a violation of their sovereignty. The situation hit the nadir with the attack on the border outpost of Salala, which resulted in

the death of 24 soldiers. This was the straw that broke the back of the proverbial camel. Pakistan ordered the Americans to vacate the Shamsi airbase in Balochistan, which was being used to launch Predator UAVs against militants in FATA. It was also decided to suspend the movement of NATO convoys through its territory until a formal apology was rendered for the death of the soldiers. The apology has now become a major sticking point. The Americans are unwilling to say sorry and Pakistanis are not ready to open up their Ground Lines of Communications (GLOC). The stoppage is costing the Americans 100 million dollars extra per month.<sup>41</sup> The Northern Distribution Network (NDN) through Central Asia is long and circuitous and it is expensive. Pakistan wants the Americans to pay more for the use of their communication infrastructure. This has only annoyed them more. Another irritant has been the conviction of Dr Shakeel Afridi under the archaic Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR). Although the charges pressed against Afridi include his links with militants of Lashkar-i-Islam, it is alleged that he has been penalised mainly for providing the CIA with DNA samples of Osama bin Laden under a fake polio scheme.<sup>42</sup> The Americans retaliated by deducting 33 million dollars from aid to Pakistan. Each million dollar withheld for the years of punishment handed down to Afridi.<sup>43</sup>

### **Why were Negotiations Resumed?**

Despite the hardnosed stance adopted by each country, it was not lost on both state parties that a breakdown in communications over an extended period could spell disaster for an already fragile relationship. This is not to say there is no contact between the two governments. Their embassies never ceased to function and there was regular exchange of delegations at lower levels. However, the atmosphere was tense and there seemed to be no headway. It took time for the air of acrimony to clear and an atmosphere of confidence and trust has to be created. The US Secretary of State eventually said 'sorry.' The Americans were extremely reluctant in doing so. They knew that Pakistan is heavily dependent on them economically and could perhaps not remain viable without their financial support. They felt that Pakistan was ungrateful and was

being greedy in demanding what they consider exorbitant amounts for transportation of the NATO supplies through their territory. Add to it the president of the US being in the midst of an election year did not want to appear weak and vacillating before his home constituency. Pakistani leadership was also faced with a similar situation. The political leadership is anticipating elections in the near future. Although the domestic audience is more concerned about power shortages than foreign policy, yet opening of the routes for the NATO convoys without meaningful concessions was considered by some pressure groups, particularly by the religious parties as a sell-out. The Pakistani government took its time in deciding how to deal with the Americans. This allowed for the public memory of what had happened at Salala to dim. So when it was decided to reopen the routes for NATO convoys, without any increase in transit rates, the domestic reaction was muted.

Americans settled issues with Pakistan for a number of reasons. As they look towards the end of 2014, as the date they will be eventually withdraw from Afghanistan, they are aware that if they leave behind a divided and unstable country, its fallouts would come back to haunt them. They have already given up on nation building as part of the Afghan solution and are now mainly concentrating on training and equipping the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), which includes both the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan Police (AP), as a guarantor of peace. The US has spent approximately \$50 billion on the ANSF project.<sup>44</sup> Unfortunately, Pakistan has been kept out of this process. To their chagrin the Indians are involved in training the Afghan forces. This is not because of the Americans alone. The Karzai government does not trust the Pakistanis and is more comfortable with the Indians. What will happen once the Americans quit Afghanistan is anybody's guess but there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding the imminent departure. Everybody knows it that Pakistan's future is linked with that of Afghanistan. Karzai, despite his repeated tirades against his eastern neighbour, has likened the two countries as 'conjoined twins.'<sup>45</sup> It will fall to the lot of the post-American Afghan regime to decide how they would like Pakistan to play a role in their common destiny. For the



moment the Americans want Pakistan to do two things. One: to stop the Taliban, particularly the Haqqanis from using staging posts in FATA to launch raids into Afghanistan. Two: to facilitate them in negotiating with the Taliban. Efforts to engage genuine Taliban leadership has so far failed to materialise. Pakistan has on a number of occasions expressed its limitations in delivering the Taliban to the Americans. The Taliban are fiercely independent and, contrary to the perception that has been created, do not listen to anybody, much less Pakistan, whom they paradoxically consider America's proxy.

Given all the complexities and divergent expectations, Pakistan has to find common ground with all concerned parties to help Afghanistan emerge from the ruins of two disastrous foreign interventions. Another failure in Afghanistan would mean large-scale refugee influx into Pakistan that will cripple its already fragile economy. As foreign forces withdraw from this bloodied and bruised country the local stakeholders will fill in the vacuum. This will include not only neighbouring countries, Pakistan and Iran, but also major powers, like Russia and China. Apparently the Americans would not like these countries to have a field day. They have invested immensely in the bases that they have established in Afghanistan. They are also keen to maintain a foothold in an area that is rich in resources particularly natural gas. They would also like to contain both a resurgent Russia and growing China. Of course, Pakistan should avoid becoming a part of a Cold War redux, but it should know how to fit into the emerging scenario. Long after the Americans are gone (partially or completely) Afghanistan is going to remain in the world's attention. Pakistan must seriously craft an Afghan policy post-American withdrawal. It will have to negotiate with multiple interlocutors in the future and it could include India.

## **Conclusion**

Ever since Pakistan and the United States of America have resumed dialogue,<sup>46</sup> the acrimony has lessened. It is a good sign. Only time will tell how things will eventually take shape in the long run. A lot, however,

depends on Pakistan. Within the US strategic community, the crisis in Pak-US relations has received special attention. The Council for Foreign Relations for instance has produced memorandum on the subject.<sup>47</sup> What Pakistan needs to do on its end is to indulge in a similar exercise. It needs to identify reasons for repeatedly getting the raw deal at the end of each relationship 'cycle'.<sup>48</sup> Perhaps a common thread can be found in the various episodes of closeness and falling apart. There are a number of examples to refer to. During the 1965 war, American military aid to Pakistan was arbitrarily stopped. An act that the Pakistanis feel was in violation to treaty pledges. Among other things, this led to a steady decline in Pakistan's military deterrence and tilted the military balance in India's favour. As a result Pakistan suffered a heavy defeat in 1971. Just before the 1971 war Pakistan played a major role in opening up the People's Republic of China to USA. For its path breaking role Pakistan naively expected the Americans to come in its aid and rescue the situation in East Pakistan. A naval task force led by USS Enterprise was sent towards the Bay of Bengal. The Indians claim that it was a blatant show of gunboat diplomacy.<sup>49</sup> Actually, it was never the aim of the Enterprise to prevent the Pakistan's military defeat in East Pakistan. It was sent to the Bay of Bengal ostensibly to evacuate American citizens from East Pakistan. In subsequent accounts, Nixon and Kissinger portrayed the movement of the Enterprise as part of a geopolitical game to counter a perceived expansion of Soviet influence and to forestall a broader Indian attack on West Pakistan.<sup>50</sup> The creation of the new state of Bangladesh had been tacitly accepted. The best that the United States wanted was to prevent Pakistan's further disintegration.<sup>51</sup> After the 1971 debacle Pakistani leadership made a strategic decision to opt for the nuclear weapon programme. Pakistan at that point of time lacked the necessary conventional weapons to counter the existential threat. Worse it did not have the cushion of the alliance systems to fall back upon. The US in its global effort to prevent nuclear proliferation did its best to prevent it from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It forced France to back out of a negotiated deal to provide Pakistan the nuclear reprocessing plant. There were change of plans and the uranium enrichment route was adopted to achieve the nuclear ambitions. It was the dedication of the Pakistani scientists and the perseverance of successive leadership that

brought the plan to its fruition. In the meanwhile the Soviets invaded Afghanistan beginning an unending saga of misery for the Afghans. The United States found it ideal to do a Vietnam on the Soviets in Afghanistan. In the new scheme of things Pakistan became a frontline ally for a second time. Over time, it has been insinuated that the Americans turned a blind eye to Pakistan's nuclear programme. Ten years later as the defeated and depleted Soviet troops withdrew across the Oxus; the Americans slapped the Pressler Amendment on Pakistan.<sup>52</sup> The American president suddenly found himself in no position to certify before the House that Pakistan was not making an atom bomb. From the most favoured ally Pakistan became the most "sanctioned ally." Pakistan was left in the wilderness. It became a pariah state but then the worst happened. The 9/11 attacks on mainland USA once again brought Pakistan into sharp focus. The infamous "with us or without us" threat was invoked. Pakistan had no option but to comply. After 11 years of bloody war Pakistan is faced with another American rejection albeit without a thank you note. This, however, should not be the end of the story. Things move on and countries reconnect on new issues of mutual benefit and convenience and who should know it better than Pakistan and the US. The lesson learnt is that conflict of interest should be avoided. This can be done, if the entire scenario is seen through the life cycle of a relationship, say at least through the next ten years.

The best way forward in beginning afresh is to create an environment of confidence and trust. The national aims and objectives, notwithstanding, the success of any negotiations emanates from honesty and sincerity. Duplicity and deception can poison any union. Preconceived ideas and festering hurts cloud the prospects of meaningful dialogue and cooperation. Lurking suspicions and doubts are impediments in rebuilding ties. There should be no baggage and a new chapter should be opened with a clean slate. Of course, it cannot be a one-sided affair, as it always takes two to tango. Hesitation and tentativeness based on past experiences cannot be simply wished away. Sometime the grievances are deep and the scars are ugly reminders of previous splits but then countries cannot remain prisoners of the past. Letting bygones be bygones and moving forward to new areas of cooperation should be the

basic approach. It takes time and effort to build trust and it takes small baby step towards that end. The next step is to find common ground, no matter how bleak the situation, there always zones of mutual interest e.g. one area, which is important for both nations, is peace and stability in the region. The US understands that Pakistan plays a pivotal role in regional stability. No wonder, Pakistan figured prominently during the televised pre-election presidential debates. In the last session held on 22 October 2012 Pakistan was mentioned 25 times in the 90-minute session; 21 times by contender Mitt Romney and four times by President Barack Obama. Obama went on to say that a nuclear armed country like Pakistan cannot be 'divorced.' Romney noted that if Pakistan "falls apart; becomes a failed state," it would "be of extraordinary danger to Afghanistan" and the US.<sup>53</sup> For right reasons or wrong, the US does not want to sever ties with Pakistan anytime soon. To show its commitment towards Pakistan, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) is extremely active in funding development projects. In order to create a good impression among the common people, these activities are being highlighted on a daily basis in the domestic print and electronic media. The Fulbright scholarship scheme programme is sending a very large number of Pakistanis to American universities for higher education. As long as the US invests in a positive way and does not put undue political pressure, Pakistan needs to respond in a similar manner. It was assumed that the unfortunate shooting of Malala Yousafzai would be used by the US to put pressure on Pakistan to begin operations in the North Waziristan Agency (NWA), home to the dreaded Haqqanis. However, the US AfPak (Afghanistan-Pakistan) envoy, Marc Grossman, in his meeting with then Pakistan Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar dispelled such rumours and said it was entirely Pakistan's decision to make.<sup>54</sup> This made it easier for the Pakistani decision-makers, who were finding it difficult to bring themselves to make such a hard decision. Eventually, a lack of consensus was cited as the reason for not opening up a new front in NWA.<sup>55</sup>

Government of Pakistan (GoP) should also do well to keep the public aware of the agreements and understandings that they are making with the Americans or for that matter any other government. The drone issue

for instance has become extremely controversial. Although it has been denied at the official quarters, there has been a lot of discussion of GoP's tacit complicity in allowing strikes of US Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) on their territory.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the permission to use the NATO supply routes through Pakistan had been done on a verbal agreement and the terms and conditions for the passage had not been formalised. This was only done after Pakistan and the US agreed to patch up after the GLOC remained closed for seven month. The MoU signed between the two governments was in the light of the UN Charter and prohibited the passage of lethal cargoes.<sup>2</sup>

Last but not least, Pakistan should look beyond the American departure from Afghanistan and prepare an approach to match the emerging situation. There are challenges and opportunities in the evolving situation. If Pakistan is able to learn from past experiences, it can surely recalibrate its negotiation strategies and steer clear of potential blind alleys. Pakistan's geo-strategic location as the regional crossroad and gateway to Central Asia has not diminished in any way. Its place as one of the largest Muslim nation and the only armed with nuclear weapons enhances its importance in more than one ways. The important question is how can Pakistan still play this trump card and leverage the most advantage out of it?

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