

Strategic Stability in South Asia: Pakistan and the Challenges of Nuclear Deterrence

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ABSTRACT

The protracted conflict between the US and the former USSR demonstrated that deterrence stability is improved by détente. South Asia's environment is characterized by mutual hostility; conventional military balance tilting in favor of India; and lack of a transparent and non-aggressive nuclear doctrine. The aforementioned factors are the missing components of détente. Both the provocative Indian expansion in its nuclear weapons programme, and Pakistani retaliatory notion of the short-range weapons option, is problematic not only in the South Asian context, but also contradictory to the decades-long experience acquired during the Cold War. Pakistan and India must move towards nuclear CBMs, doctrinal clarity, and risk-reduction measures in the light of new technological advancements, and changing US role in the region.

Key Words: Strategic Stability, South Asia, Deterrence, Crisis Management, Nuclear Doctrine.

Introduction

The challenges of escalation control render it imperative to study the impact of rational deterrence on South Asia's strategic stability with special focus on Indo-Pakistan crisis management. The requirements of deterrence posit that critical interaction with India should be improved through confidence- and security-building measures, including third party mediation to reduce deep mistrust. The role of Indian doctrine needs to be clarified, and the region's military imbalance should not be allowed to reach acute proportions. India and Pakistan might not seek nuclear war but worsening of bilateral ties due to recurring crises could lead to deterioration in strategic stability. If the two countries do get engaged in a general war, their conventional force imbalance could convert it into a nuclear war. Therefore, both states must avoid any conventional and limited war to prevent crisis escalation.

An ambivalent effect of nuclear technology is caused due to the nature of mutual conflict and hostility between Pakistan and India, which remains unique to the region (Sridharan, 2007). Analogies drawn with the Cold War nuclear conflict are of limited utility. The South Asian nuclear rivalry is made further dangerous

due to the following regional realities: First, geographical contiguity; Second, existence of active conflicts like Kashmir, terrorism, water issue and nuclear proliferation; And third, the mindsets of the ruling elite that do not allow confidence-building measures (CBMs) to take root, along with the diminishing US role in the region.

The unique strategic environment of South Asia could result in a nuclear winter (Robock, Oman & Stenchikov, 2007) and increases the necessity for South Asians – both Indians and Pakistanis collectively – to learn the limits of safety (Sagan, 1995). In order for arms- and escalation-control to become a meaningful concept of any real consequence in the region, it needs to be realized at the public level that the nuclear capability does not possess any battlefield and warfighting role in Pakistan's and India's pursuit of national objectives. The most viable option left to both protagonists is to collectively strive toward resolution of existing issues, which could incite war, in tandem with adoption of the policy of nuclear détente. This could be in the form of nuclear CBMs (Chari, 2005).

A significant challenge to regional security pertains to Pakistan's threat perceptions about India's military intentions and nuclear weapons programme (Jaspal, 2011). The conventional balance of power is characterized by an increasing gap as evidenced in qualitative and quantitative imbalance in military terms. In Pakistan's view, the balance of terror that undergirds the mutually assured destruction (MAD) theory can be maintained if India is willing to adhere to a minimalist deterrence posture – i.e. minimal nuclear deterrence (MND). A policy of capping vertical proliferation including missile defence systems would overtly demonstrate transparency and non-aggressiveness, and thereby strengthen regional security and strategic stability within the framework of rational nuclear deterrence.

India's nuclear-weapon programme's acquisitions and advancements reiterate Pakistan's fears about the security threat posed by India (Wikileaks, 2010). It does not reveal anything not known previously about India's intentions toward Pakistan. Pakistani commentators had been writing and reporting about the Cold Start doctrine (CSD). India's strategy - since the 1980s - of amputating Pakistan from the middle, has metamorphosed into combined arms swift attacks to slice off chunks of land, or surgical strikes without holding on to territory or large size force incursions.

Nuclear deterrence in regional setting: framing the problem

In order to decipher Pakistani and Indian security calculus, and the phenomenon of conflict formation in the region, the theory and praxis of regional deterrence is analyzed. Indo-Pakistan crisis management is an apt case study by many standards. The regional environment in South Asia is characterized by hegemonic-objective conflict. According to Barry Buzan's theory of Regional Security Complex (RSC), dynamics of conflicts in a region can lead to either hegemony or balance of power (Buzan, Wæver & Wilde, 1998).

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While balance of power provides little incentive for de-stabilization, the condition of hegemony provides 'escalation dominance' to the hegemon, thereby increasing risk of the breakdown of escalation control. Another view derived from Buzan's theory of RSC was the nature of regional environment. According to Buzan, South Asia is transitioning from being a security regime, where some guarantees of security exist, to a state of conflict formation, where none do. The ideal state is a 'security community' with substantial security guarantees that clearly do not exist in the South Asian case.

A nuclear South Asia was supposed to be characterized by hostility but within a predictable environment. But these predictions have proved only half-true in reality (Sagan & Waltz, 2003). Mansoor Ahmed provides a detailed and comprehensive exposition of the increasing gap in India-Pakistan conventional and nuclear military capabilities in 2016 article on "Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Their Impact on Stability." (Ahmed, 2016) India's *Weltanschauung* on the nuclear question e.g. attitude toward nuclear weapons, doctrine and policy – has been discussed by Vipin Narang in 2013 article on "Five Myths about India's Nuclear Posture." (Narang, 2013)

This study posits that there are three important factors or indicators that act as drivers of the South Asian conflict. The first is an environment characterized by degradation in bilateral relations. This environment causes an obstruction in escalation control and crisis management efforts. The second factor is the problematic role and vague concept of doctrine in nuclear competition. The third factor is the increasing strategic and conventional military imbalance in the region. This includes the Indian military strategy of limited war – whether it is in the form of surgical strikes or a full-fledged eight-division blitzkrieg attack as envisioned under the CSD. If all three factors register negative trends, then this puts deterrence at risk.

In order for regional deterrence stability and escalation control to be a viable option in the South Asian milieu, the role of the extra-regional states must be positive. Along with the US, China and Russia are also major stakeholders in the South Asian region. So while the US remains the center of focus, Russia and China both merit mention as their role cannot be ignored or overlooked. Nonetheless, with US even-handedness in approach, regional stability can be strengthened with arms control measures and progress toward political settlement of the core regional dispute of Kashmir. The US role in the region has vacillated since the 2014 military drawdown in Afghanistan. (Ackerman, 2017) The US closeness to India has driven Pakistan's decision-makers away from the US due to the perception of separate and distinct interests (Burns, 2014). Going forward, the US needs to play a strong diplomatic role if it is interested in preserving the global non-proliferation regime.

This study was prompted by a broad query about the causal factors behind the gathering conflict in South Asia. While certain similarities exist between South Asia and the Cold War situation, however, the paper specifically seeks to investigate the following questions with South Asian focus:

1. What would be the role of the regional environment - level of distrust and hostility in bilateral relations - and the role of the US and others as extra-regional actors in bringing about strategic stability?
2. What are the implications of an absence of military parity and symmetry, and the resultant regional power imbalance for regional strategic stability? What is the impact of nuclear postures on conflict formation? What is the role of the Indian nuclear doctrine?
3. What role could be played by détente in affecting regional strategic stability?

The hypothesis of the study is that, “Nuclear deterrence stability is improved by détente, and its concomitant processes such as, nuclear CBMs, doctrinal clarity and risk-reduction measures.” The paper begins with the theoretical framework and literature review, followed by an overview of regional nuclear deterrence and its impact upon crisis management in South Asia. It subsequently analyzes some of the myths surrounding the Indian nuclear doctrine, which includes a critical analysis of ambiguities that are prevalent in the concept of MND, which could be quantified in the South Asian case as prevention of vertical nuclear proliferation, and mutual arms delimitation including missile defence systems. Further, this work analyzes the dichotomy between the declared doctrine and the on-ground posture, and its serious consequences for South Asia’s regional strategic stability. The following section delves into the origins and progression of regional deterrence.

South Asia: evolution of regional nuclear deterrence

The trajectory of nuclear deterrence can progress in two opposite directions. The positive one is détente. The two Cold War adversaries chose the path toward détente soon after they achieved nuclear parity. It paid them considerable dividends in the form of prevention against a general war. The efforts to achieve nuclear parity due to the perceived threat posed to conventional symmetry, and its possible consequences, is the enduring lesson of Cold War. The threat to nuclear parity leads towards the negative road of compellence, nuclear arms races, proxy wars, crises, and conflict escalation. The relentless pursuit of nuclear parity could eventually prove to be a mirage, when a situation of military and economic ‘overstretch’ is reached. This nature of arms race has been termed by Helen Caldicott as “missile envy” (Caldicott, 1986). If India and Pakistan continue to go down this road it would prove to be a costly journey for both.

India’s latest nuclear advancement is in the form of deployment of nuclear submarines for sea-based second-strike (Abbasi, 2015) capability through submarine-launched missiles (SLBMs). These submarines can hide in the ocean during an attack, and then they can launch a second strike even if the attacked country has been rendered unable to launch a land-based retaliatory strike. In view of this latest Indian acquisition, an added pressure is now placed on Pakistan to develop sea-based deterrence. This is not simply a compulsion to catch up to the

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adversary's capabilities as in the case of arms race spirals. Acquiring second-strike capability is meant to preclude deterrence-failure in accordance with the rational deterrence theory. Second-strike capability strengthens deterrence by removing the incentive to launch a first strike. The possession of the second-strike capability by both sides serves to strengthen the framework of deterrence.

The increasing military imbalance in the region is demonstrated in the following couple of risky developments impeding strategic stability in South Asia. These risky developments include India's second-strike capability through SLBMs, and the proclivity on both sides to avoid deterrence-by-punishment and employ the nukes for purposes of deterrence-by-denial— battlefield deployment of tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs). It is noteworthy that deterrence-by-denial must include host of other capabilities including the TNWs. The possession of TNWs alone is not enough to conclude a state's deterrence posture changing from punishment to denial. According to Mansoor Ahmed, the official narrative in Pakistan is that the short-range ballistic missiles are necessary due to Indian plans of limited war although their actual warfighting role is as yet unclear (Ahmed, 2016). Pakistani officials have claimed numerous times about Nasr's (Pakistan's short range ballistic missile) role in deterring India from operationalizing CSD. Nasr has no specific warfighting role but has deterrence value. Vipin Narang contends that [by acquiring nuclear submarines as sea-based deterrent] India is trying to right a strategic imbalance created due to Pakistani doctrine of asymmetric escalation which made nuclear war fightable and winnable for Pakistan (Narang, 2013).

As the two states out of the four that nuclearized in the second nuclear age, the Sub-continental neighbors are the two nuclear weapon states (NWS) that routinely engage in a conventional military standoff along an extended territorial boundary. Some parts of this border extending from the Himalayan north to the southern Arabian Sea coasts remain hotly disputed and could become nuclear flashpoints (BBC, 2000). During the Cold War experience, the nuclear adversaries engaged in military competition but at the same time engaged in simultaneous dialogue under the framework of *détente* (Morris, 1977).

The Indo-Pakistan *détente* that began as a result of the post-Agra thaw (in July 2001) met a cold fate at the hands of the Indian CSD (from 2004 onwards). It was consequent to the Indian Cold Start planning that Pakistan sought to acquire the short-range ballistic missiles (in April 2011). Pakistani experts point out that it required extra effort and scarce nuclear material to miniaturize the nuclear payload to fit on a smaller platform, while simultaneously trying to overcome the difficulty of combining sufficient yield with portability (Ahmed, 2016).

The Indian revision of the Sundarji model of force mobilization and shift to Cold Start military strategy led to Pakistan's option of short-range ballistic missile (Narang, 2013). This, in turn, resulted in the Indian moves to consider pre-emptive counterforce and decapitation strikes. There are reports that a further aggressive revision in the Indian nuclear doctrine might be in process (Marcus, 2000). This is a catch-22 situation. In order to prevent the failure of deterrence, according to the

theory of rational deterrence, Pakistan would be placed under increased pressure to acquire reliable and stable second-strike capability like nuclear-powered submarines. Land-based missiles, including cruise missiles, are not considered as full-fledged second-strike capability due to issues including launch-site safety and security etc.

In the wake of new technological advancements and as part of the recent nuclear modernization drive, India has developed short-range missiles on the one hand, which enhances its preemptive options, and on the other hand it has developed the sea-based nuclear launch capability (Abbasi, 2015). This sea-based second-strike capability provides it with potential escalation dominance. Pakistan's possession of the short-range missiles pertains to control over the escalation initiation stage of any nuclear conflict. Consequently, Pakistan would have to rely, as per the theory of rational deterrence, on the second-strike ability to retain escalation equality – and thereby maintain deterrence.

The concept of rational deterrence stipulates that second-strike capability on the part of both sides would fortify deterrence because of mutually assured destruction (MAD) theory. By transposing the theory of rational deterrence to a regional setting e.g. South Asia, it can be evidenced that the Indian modernization effort entails significant technological advancement. For example, according to the Pakistan experts, Indian investments in nuclear submarines and multiple independent re-entry vehicles (MIRV) technology etc. are pushing the region towards a nuclear arms race. India is reportedly working on Agni-V, which has multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV) capabilities, and Agni-VI with Maneuverable re-entry vehicles (MaRV) capabilities (Gady, 2018).

In the following segment, the paper explores role of rational deterrence amidst evolving trends in crisis management. Subsequently, the impact of doctrine is studied within the context of declarations like Credible Minimum Deterrence. In the last section, prevailing myths about the Indian nuclear doctrine have been analyzed.

Nuclear deterrence & crisis management in South Asia

The establishment of rational deterrence has brought forth new strategic realities in South Asian politics (Khan & Khan, 2016). According to the regional experts, the role of nuclear deterrence in maintaining crisis stability has produced mixed results in the various crises, which have erupted ever since the nuclearization of the region (Chari, Cheema & Cohen, 2009). During the Kargil and Mumbai crises, the unwillingness to move toward crisis escalation was seen as the contribution of the nuclear factor. A crisis in South Asia, if escalated, could now mean an existential threat to the protagonists and a nuclear winter for the region. This fear factor appeared to have served as a driving force for escalation control in Indo-Pakistan relations. However, the regional crisis management is set to face challenging times ahead owing to the embryonic military and political trends.

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The re-election of right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2019 signaled a new trend in Indian politics with implications for South Asia's strategic stability (Corbridge, 1999). Indian foreign policy of nuclear competition and regional arms race pose a threat to crisis stability and peacekeeping in a nuclear South Asia.

A chronological view of the four crises since 1998 reveals that Indian policy of force mobilization in Kargil and Mumbai has now been replaced with claims of surgical strikes in Pathankot and Uri. The Kargil war appeared to be the first successful instance of the viability of nuclear deterrence. India was militarily stronger than Pakistan, but it chose to de-escalate the conflict due to the rational deterrence factor. The phenomenon of military restraint repeated itself during crises in 2001-02 standoff, as well as the Mumbai attacks in 2008. But a significant change can be discerned in the Kargil-Mumbai episodes versus the Pathankot-Uri crises.

The Indian stance toward Pakistan went through a shift in the aftermath of the Kargil-Mumbai episodes, which had an impact on the regional patterns of crisis management. In 2016, Pathankot and Uri attacks were the two subsequent crises that threatened regional peace. The Indian army claimed, "surgical strike" in Pakistani Kashmir and that it destroyed six to eight "launch pads of militants" (Khan, 2016). It further informed that the militants were preparing to enter inside India from the Pakistani territory for another attack. The Indian army's statement described the Indian surgical strike to be in response to the recent attack by alleged Pakistani backed militants in Indian-held Kashmir. India frequently accuses Pakistan Army and intelligence services of supporting militants and anti-Indian activities (Ganguly & Kraig, 2005). For Pakistan, the Indian discourse about military attack inside its territory after Pathankot and Uri points to a future Indian proclivity to favor cross border intrusions. It should be noted, after all, that the need for quick mobilization and capacity for surgical strike is the area wherein lie the origins of the CSD.

Hence Pakistani statements strongly hint that any ingress beyond the LoC and along the international border would result in crisis escalation (Monrow & Bipindra, 2017). This includes the development of claiming military operations inside Pakistani territory. Coupled with a reduction in US influence post-Afghan drawdown and increasing Russo-Chinese interest in the region, the BJP government's foreign policy has brought a marked shift in patterns of regional crisis management (Korybko, 2016). For instance, the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi opined that the Uri attack would not go unpunished. Mr. Modi further said that he would isolate Pakistan in the world because of its support for terrorism.

In the Pakistani view, the flawed approach of the Modi government toward crisis management has placed the regional security in danger, and tensions could escalate. The key to preserving the precarious stability in the region is to tackle the roots of regional tensions i.e. Kashmir issue (Khan & Khan, 2016). Only after this pre-condition is met then the Pakistani state would be armed with the political capital to take decisive action against the phenomenon of extremism and

militancy. Both states can work together against violent and extremist elements of all hues and stripes, only if there is common recognition of threat.

Nuclear doctrine in South Asia

The role of a nuclear doctrine could become significant for regional strategic stability (Freedman, 2016). For a doctrine to be a source of regional stability and to avoid the zero-sum mode, it must possess the twin features of transparency and non-aggressiveness. Pakistan has argued against a declaratory doctrine on the basis of obvious nuclear redlines in order to prevent nuclear brinkmanship on India's part. As shown in the re-visitation by the Wikileaks' (Wikileaks, 2010), Indian military pro-activeness in the form of Cold Start, and Pakistani strategy of a 'first strike option' and recent reports about its battlefield nuclear capability, has not helped regional tensions.

Nuclear deterrence is related to possession of nuclear capability while MAD is related to overkill capacity or disproportional size of nuclear warheads. So, while deterrence is not necessarily aimed at establishing MAD like situation, yet deterrence is a theoretical outcome of MAD. In order to establish a situation of MAD the nuclear doctrine is always declaratory in nature (Viotti & Kauppi, 1999). It comprises features of the national objective and methods to achieve them (Khalid, 2012). Clarity in doctrine provides stability to a situation of rational deterrence (Lavoy, Sagan & Wirtz, 2000). In an enduring situation of nuclear deterrence if simultaneous measures directed toward deterrence stability - conventional parity, doctrinal clarity and nuclear détente - were not initiated, the region would continue to suffer from deterioration in strategic stability.

Nuclear doctrine has assumed a critical role in escalation control and détente in the second nuclear age. Nonetheless, the genesis of the modern nuclear doctrine took place within the dynamics of Cold War deterrence. It was during decades of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s that various US administrations formulated strategies of nuclear use. The initial posture was massive retaliation as evident in the single integrated operational plan (SIOP) forces (Burr, 2004). Flexible response was formulated later and mainly intended to give the president more options when nuclear theorizing had gotten stuck in 'massive retaliation'. This doctrine provided a way out through battlefield use of nuclear weapons short of full-scale nuclear war.

India's nuclear doctrine got formulated in 1999 and was revised in 2003 (Cheema, 2010). However, according to expert opinion India has failed to actually operationalize most of the assertions that form part of the Indian doctrine (Latif, 2014). The clarity, transparency and non-aggressiveness of the doctrine can be observed through the actual nuclear posture, which remains aggressive in the Indian case. This situation is contrary to what a publicly reported nuclear doctrine espousing minimum nuclear deterrence (MND) stipulates. In actual practice it appears far from being minimal, the nuclear doctrine is a vehicle for India's pursuit of decisive nuclear superiority.

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The formal Indian nuclear doctrine has declared adoption of “credible minimum deterrence”. The practical Indian nuclear posture points to the necessity of maintaining a second-strike capability, short range missiles, MIRVing technology, a nuclear triad, attempts to side step the No First Use (NFU) policy, and vertical escalation in terms of acquisition of space-related high-tech systems. The concept of MND has become problematic notion due to its vagueness. This is critical because the minimalist approach in fact forms the linchpin of any stable rational deterrence situation.

Unlike Cold War experience, in South Asia, India has decided to keep all its options open including massive retaliation, flexible response and efforts to merge its military and nuclear strategies under the umbrella of nuclear doctrine, which is aggressive and vague in nature. Therefore, exigencies of flexible response mean that warfighting strategies are being considered by India. This coupled with sea-based striking capability, limited war and advanced space research programme means that the Indian objective is achievement of escalation dominance.

India hopes to win a conventional conflict, and also expects to sustain a first nuclear attack because of its geographical depth and triad of atomic arsenal. Consequently, strategic experts believe that the Indian military advantage can be offset by Pakistan if it is able to position nuclear tipped missiles on its diesel submarines to acquire a plausible second strike nuclear capability (Ahmed, 2016).

Pakistani position is that strategic weapons are meant for war-avoidance. However, fear of employment is a natural consequence of a capability in being. From the 1980s onwards, Pakistan’s strategy has been that the nuclear deterrent would be employed against both Indian nuclear and overwhelming conventional attack because it could threaten Pakistan’s nuclear deterrent triggering a ‘use them or lose them’ response (Matinuddin, 2002). This is similar to the policy of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) towards Warsaw Pact members in European theatre during the Cold War (Khan & Khan, 2016).

Pakistan does not possess an announced doctrine; however, it has made clear that its nuclear posture is one of minimum nuclear deterrence. Ideally, this minimalist approach means avoidance of a spiraling arms race in conventional arms and resisting vertical nuclear proliferation. India’s policy of military modernization and re-grouping battle formations as in Cold Start would add to the conventional imbalance. Indian conventional dominance would increase Pakistan’s reliance on nuclear deterrence.

Pakistan’s nuclear posture entails a first strike but last resort option. As stated earlier, Pakistan considers its nukes to act as deterrents against both Indian nuclear and conventional attack. From statements of policy-makers it can be gleaned that Pakistan would wish to opt for a graduated response in line with necessity and proportionality (Ahmed, 2016). However, India’s development of a nuclear triad would entail swift retaliation. So, the weapons would be in a state where they can “shift from peacetime deployment to fully employable forces in the shortest possible time”. This means that both Pakistan and India would stay on verge of

initiating a nuclear exchange. Therefore, the region's deterrence and crisis stability would continue to remain fragile.

Myths about Indian nuclear doctrine

There are certain myths associated with Indian nuclear doctrine. Although India formally adopted a nuclear doctrine of assured retaliation, its doctrine has evolved significantly since 2000s. Indian nuclear doctrine is not as minimal as it is made out to be. This carries implications for nuclear security and strategic stability. Indian nuclear doctrine claims to adopt credible minimum deterrence. There is ambiguity in *Minimum*. It is a concept that exists only on paper in India's declared doctrine. Achieving credible minimum deterrence towards China and Pakistan is impossible. Besides India is publicly using the China scare to covertly develop Pakistan-specific weapon systems and operational plans.

Another myth abounds in regard to Indian nuclear weapons being kept in a disassembled state. It was widely believed that such assets were kept in distributed form with different custodians for safety purpose. This commonly held belief is also a myth (Koithara, 2012). The NFU policy is a myth too. India's nuclear doctrine of 2003 undermined the policy of NFU (Sagan, 2009).

Another myth that is prevalent about the Indian command and control is that the political leadership determines India's nuclear postures. In actuality, the political leadership especially the Prime Minister office does not exercise influence over nuclear postures. This has been frequently commented upon e.g. the Indian defence research and development organization (DRDO) informed about manufacture of Agni VI, an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM), but conceded the (Indian) Union government had not sanctioned it till then. This meant that India was developing ICBMs without clearance from civil authority (Subramanian, 2013). Last but not the least, there is a myth about the security of the Indian nuclear installations. The security parameter at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) had been breached several times within a period of two years (Ahmed, 2012).

Conclusion

According to constructivist logic, although reality might be unalterable but outcomes depend on how situations are framed (Burchill, Linklater, Devetak, Donnelly, Nardin, Paterson, Reus-Smit & True, 2013). So, just as the credibility of nuclear deterrence is strengthened through strategy rather than through weaponry, similarly, the enunciation of a doctrine enhances strategic stability rather than damaging it (Gray, 2009). However for the sake of strategic stability a doctrine should, in principle, be clearly enunciated, transparent and non-aggressive in its nature and effects. A doctrine cannot be vague or misleading. The significance of a doctrine is lost in vague and misunderstood terminology and concepts. In such a scenario, it is only possible to keep track of the adversary's

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nuclear intentions by focusing on the actual posture on the ground. If the battlefield posture and technological capabilities were aggressive then the professed and declaratory doctrine espousing non-aggression would be devoid of relevance.

In the absence of adequate crisis management in the region, both sides should make an effort to understand each other's perspectives on deterrence so that the nuclear competition does not turn into a spiraling arms race and assume the form of a syndrome. Doctrinal clarity is also required to reduce the fog of war in the event of another crisis in the future.

According to Pakistani analysts, Pakistan acquired nuclear technology to deter any conventional or non-conventional threat from India (Cheema, 2011). Keeping in view Indian designs, Pakistan resolved to achieve credible security, that forms the basis of its nuclear doctrine of 'minimum nuclear deterrence plus credibility'. Pakistan was forced to move toward 'full-spectrum deterrence' due to the compulsion to resort to short-range missiles because of Indian CSD. The short-range missiles are intended to target military assets in real time, what Pakistani experts put as the "Shoot and Scoot" capability. Another reason why Pakistan turned to short-range nuclear weapons was because of the need for self-reliance since the pre-Pathankot involvement and influence of the US did not exist in the region anymore.

The role of the US is going through a gradual retrenchment in South Asia as global uni-polarity gives way to multi-polarity. Further, due to expanding Indo-US defense ties the sense of nuclear apartheid has increased in Islamabad. In the Pakistani view, the Indo-US nuclear deal; obligating Pakistan to sign fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), and exclusion from nuclear supplier's group (NSG), are among factors perceived to be leaning toward discrimination.

Finally, as the protracted conflict between the US and erstwhile USSR proved, deterrence stability is strengthened by the institution of détente. And the adherence to a transparent and non-aggressive nuclear doctrine is one of the primary and necessary components of détente. Pakistan and India must move toward nuclear CBMs, doctrinal clarity, and risk-reduction measures in light of new technological advancements and changing US role in the region.

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