

Journal of Peace Studies Vol. 8 Issue 4, July-August 2001

**Military Restructuring for Peace in South Asia:
Problems and Prospects**

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The paper was prepared by Dr. Malhotra as a Guest Research Fellow at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI), Copenhagen, Denmark during April-May 2001. The author is grateful to the COPRI for providing him Research Fellowship and financial assistance to complete this peace project.

By the end of the twentieth century when the world is free from super power cold war, South Asia is still suffering from the pains of regional cold war that is going on between the two major countries of this region. Cold war between India and Pakistan is not new. It has been there since 1947 when both became independent states after partition. Thrice this cold war also turned hot when they fought wars in 1948, 1965 and 1971. Recently, they again indulged in a war like situation or a limited war in Kargil in May-July 1999. In the last three years arms race in South Asia has gained momentum as both India and Pakistan have conducted nuclear tests, are testing a variety of missiles and acquiring new weapons from other countries. The recent Agra Summit does not seem to carry much impact on the nature of relationship between the two countries. In this context a detailed discussion on defence or military restructuring or peace prove helpful for policy makers evolving strategies for peace.

In a recent study on defence restructuring conducted by European Commission, Jelusic[1] concludes: “defence restructuring is a process that affects all national and transnational defence organisations and institutions following the end of the Cold War. The end of the Cold War has influenced the nature of contemporary conflicts; it has created possibilities for reductions in military expenditure and in the size of the armed forces. By and large all countries with different political system, size and role in the international community are moving towards restructuring of their defence capabilities aiming at non-offensive defence. The Non-Offensive Defence (NOD) can offer the best solution to the security problems in South Asia and will open new possibilities for arms control and regional stability. The present paper will make an attempt to discuss the problems and prospects of such a policy in the context of India-Pakistan relations.

The Idea of Military Restructuring and Non-Offensive Defence

The proponents of Non-Offensive Defence are closely identified with ‘Peace Movement’ and regard their prescriptions as part of a grand crusade for a ‘non-aggressive world.’ “As such, their alternative defence concepts can be seen as new solutions to a problem that has bedevilled mankind since history began....” explains Gates.[2] Keeping in mind this object the present paper seeks to putline a

peace project in the South Asian region which urgently needs military restructuring (MIL) and Non-Offensive Defence (NOD) at the moment.

Military expenditure consumes a large part of national expenditure in India and Pakistan. It is a pity that while military expenditure is declining in most parts of the world, it is rising in South Asia that went nuclear with the tests by India and Pakistan in 1998. However, it is useful to drive home the oft-repeated point that nuclear weapons cannot increase a country's security, as it is impossible to use them in the present circumstances. The deterrence value of prohibitive investment in nuclear field has also been contested by many strategic thinkers. The Kargil experience immediately after the nuclear tests proves this point in South Asia. Moreover, this is unfortunate when both India and Pakistan are facing a number of political, social, economic and environmental problems that require immediate attention. These countries with limited resources and unlimited problems can ill-afford arms race and over militarization. In order to embark upon a path of socio-economic development, military restructuring, arms control and disarmament are desirable. In this context it is hoped that the adoption of Non-offensive Defence (NOD) will eliminate chain of action-reaction-escalation in the arms race. The NOD would definitely be an economically wise investment in the region. Both India and Pakistan can learn a lot from the NOD achievements and examples of the countries especially of Russia, European and South African countries.[3]

Problems

Lack of understanding of NOD

The adoption of NOD entails the harmonising of a number of conflicting interests and will raise some very complex political, economic, ideological and military problems that will relate to the doctrine and reorient the design, command, purpose and strategy of the armed forces. The first and the foremost problem in regard to military restructuring in India and Pakistan is that the political and military leaders and the people at large are not well aware of the positive concepts like NOD military restructuring(MIL). There is a clear lack of interest among political and defence leaders in concepts like NOD and MIL that may hedge/inhibit the ongoing preparations for an eventual encounter, especially after the Kargil encounter. Political leaders are busy using the prevailing sense of insecurity to their advantage and are seen to be adopting an all out offensive posture. They try to reap good electoral harvest or public sympathy for their regimes by demonstrating their unflinching sense of patriotism before the illiterate masses and thus continue to invest heavily in defence. They feel proud in declaring that their country has acquired nuclear status. Both Indian and Pakistani decision-makers are prisoners of domestic factors and regional issues. Indian and Pakistani decision-makers lack the political will to build the necessary climate of trust essential for the success of the MIL.

There is a lack of education and dissemination of information regarding MIL in South Asia. The concepts like NOD and MIL, related to peace research are neither in syllabi in schools and universities nor do they form part of military education and training in military institutes and training centres. There is an enormous lack of knowledge regarding concepts like NOD and MIL even among concerned and well-informed people in the region.

Indo-Pak rivalry

The third main problem the longstanding rivalry between India and Pakistan on the one hand and India and China on the other. All these three countries are suspicious of the intentions of one another. All these have very rigid and stubborn stand on issues that divide them. This rigidity comes in the way of going for MIL in South Asia. Synnott, the British diplomat who served in India for three years rightly observed “the legacy of 50 years of acrimony between India and Pakistan, along with India’s longstanding rivalry with China, will not be easily erased.”[4]

For the last few years nuclear and missile race is going on between India and Pakistan on the one hand and between India and China on the other. The nuclear and missile nexus between Pakistan and China adds a more complicated dimension to the entire problem. India and Pakistan tested nuclear devices in 1998 and are in possession of nuclear weapons as well as reliable delivery systems. A commentator observes: “The vision of secure nations for both India and Pakistan implies mastery over defence technologies. That is why nuclear weapons have become the ultimate symbol of nationalist accomplishment” otherwise these two countries have “little to show by way of achievement in areas like health, education, and the amelioration of poverty.”[5] Both have embarked upon a path of developing short and medium range ballistic missiles as delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons. “Neither India nor Pakistan has shown any inclination to slow, still less halt, the development of nuclear-capable missiles and warheads” says Synnott [6]

Nuclear and missile race

The Central Intelligence Agency of the US has expressed concern over nuclear proliferation, development of missiles and weapons of mass destruction by India and Pakistan and does not rule out the prospect of another round of nuclear tests by both the countries. Competition between the two South Asian nations on the nuclear proliferation front is along predicted lines and there is no sign that the situation has improved. Pressure exerted on both the countries by the USA through slapping of comprehensive sanctions three years back has been unproductive, CIA Director George J. Tenet admitted before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.[7]

It is also believed that Pakistan has edged past India in nuclear weapons capability since the two countries conducted nuclear tests in May, 1998, as per the reports of London-based *Jane’s Intelligence Review*. India, which has grander national aspirations, moved at a slower pace in deciding and completing delivery systems, evolving procedures, tactics and doctrine for nuclear use as well as for ensuring effective control over nuclear forces. Pakistan on the other hand moved quickly to implement effective systems and procedures for its more modest nuclear arsenal. An official proclamation by India’s nuclear scientists notwithstanding, it had not proceeded to develop an effective missile-based nuclear deterrent as quickly as Pakistan and was yet to deploy a missile force in quantity. Indian nuclear policies and forces are controlled by its democratic political leadership, scientists from the Atomic Energy Commission and the Defence Research and Development Organisation. But the political leadership had not fully thought through specifics of nuclear use or doctrine and did not view such weapons as possessing military utility

and discounted the possibility of them being used on the battlefield. It visualises only the political utility of nuclear weapons as these bring international prestige and provide deterrence vis-à-vis Pakistan and China.

On the contrary, Pakistan's nuclear forces were controlled by the army and had been more fully incorporated into the country's overall military strategy. *Jane's weekly* said Pakistan officials believed Islamabad's nuclear capability gave it the option of strongly supporting insurgency in Kashmir. The view was based on the belief that India would not dare hit back with strong conventional weapons for fear of escalation to nuclear levels. Despite all these moves, Islamabad was yet to fully develop its nuclear force structure, it said.[8]

In what seems to be a direct reaction to the *Jane's Intelligence Review* report of Pakistan having already put its nuclear control and command procedure and also deciding on its delivery systems, Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee on March 27, 2001 directed that the recommendations of the Group of Ministers' (GoM) on reforming the national security system be implemented and various measures to be taken for it be placed before the Cabinet for formal approval. The measure would include the establishment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) which is a long-standing demand of the Armed Forces and granting of greater powers to Service Headquarters. The establishment of CDS would be a major step forward for India also establishing its Nuclear Command and Control System and it could mean a totally independent post from that of the Chief of Army staff as directions have also been given for the review of the possible appointment of an Inspector General of Army. This decision gave indications of the CDS also possibly getting the control of the country's nuclear arsenal. The Group of Ministers had set up four task forces—management of defence, border management, internal security and intelligence apparatus—following the findings of the Kargil Review Committee. The task forces had submitted their reports some time back. Reports of these task forces contain little about the MIL in context of the NOD.

In April 1999, Musharraf, Pakistan's then Chief of Army Staff, declared that the Joint Staff Headquarters was to have a command-and-control arrangement and secretariat, with wide powers over nuclear issues such as the CTBT and missile-related technology. A strategic force command would also be set up.[9] According to other reports the Defence Cabinet Committee would be used, thereby strengthening civilian control. But military coup on 12 October 1999 changed the situation and raised additional issues regarding accountability and nuclear responsibilities, not least since the positions of Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Joint Staff Headquarters and Chief Executive of the Country are all held by Musharraf alone. Development of sophisticated command-and-control measures first by Pakistan and then by India may be good in view of nuclear weapons capability. But it may not be good from the NOD's viewpoint as sophisticated command-and-control measures by reducing ambiguity increase the likelihood of war.

Ahmed and Cotright are concerned about "the issue of command and control, whereby the dominance of armed forces in strategic decision-making in Pakistan is built upon secrecy. This lack of transparency undermines the functioning of effective deterrence, which can only be possible through a transparent strategic interaction." They further apprehend, as "the almost exclusive control of the nuclear weapons by

the Pakistani military establishment increases the odds of accidental or inadvertent launch of weapons of mass destruction.”[10]. This concern is further heightened by the concentration of all powers in the hands of military dictator Musharraf after the coup of October 1999 in Pakistan. There is a risk of accidental or deliberate nuclear war—the detonation of even a single nuclear weapon on one city will be disastrous.

Successive military coups and throttling of democracy in Pakistan further complicates the situation. Military dictators always believe in offensive postures instead of defensive. Out of the three major wars between India and Pakistan two were imposed upon India by Pakistan’s military dictators in 1965 and 1971. The role of Pakistani Army in the Kargil offensive is common knowledge now. Even during the times of civilian democratic rule in Pakistan, military plays key role in the political system and influences civilian decision-making apparatus of the government. Military in Pakistan has always been for militarisation and offensive postures against India instead of MIL in the context of NOD.

In addition to nuclear weapons and missiles, India and Pakistan are trying to make, import or acquire new and sophisticated conventional weapons as well. Joeck appropriately states the necessity for conventional weapons: “Even with nuclear weapons available and securely stored on delivery vehicles to prevent pre-emption from eliminating them, deterrence would require both sides to maintain a high level of conventional defence readiness.”[11]. Both are sensitive to each other’s activities and continue to expand militarily. Side by side Indian race with China prompts Indo-Pak competition.

Another term that has become a common parlance for the political and military leaders of India and Pakistan is ‘minimum deterrence’ or ‘credible minimum deterrence’. The words ‘minimum’ and ‘credible’ are ambiguous and offer many interpretations. As the threat perception changes with the passage of time neither side is ready to officially define the nature, number, size and range of deterrence. It is still doubtful that nuclear deterrence is enough to prevent full-scale war especially after the Kargil war. The Kargil crisis “shows that a blind faith in the efficacy of nuclear weapons to prevent a conventional war between India and Pakistan needs serious reconsideration.”[12]. The same holds good for future as well. Minimum deterrence can neither fully avoid nuclear war nor limit its consequences if war breaks out. Peace researchers like Møller and Wiberg rightly point out, “NOD was thus conceived as a possible contribution to rendering nuclear deterrence superfluous, or at least to reducing its rationale to that of minimum deterrence.”[13] But in South Asia in the garb of vague and subjective terms like ‘minimum’ and ‘credible’ both the adversaries claim to retain the right to review the size of deterrent and make as much nuclear weapons as they can. This way minimum credible deterrence has become another obstacle in the way of NOD and MIL.

Technological Lag

Technology is a very crucial factor in the MIL. Special kind of technological advancement and skills are required for making defensive weapons and equipments. In the MIL the defensive characteristics of weapon systems are to be developed. For example instead of deep strike aircraft and long-range bombers, stress should be on air defence aircraft and missiles. In tank designs, the firepower and protection may be

given precedence over mobility. Other innovative and effective defensive weapons systems and equipments would have to be specifically devised. But India and Pakistan greatly lack in this. For example India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) which was set up in 1960 is one of the three important defence organisations. The other two being Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Defence Production. It is a sad state of India's military technology that 53 years after Independence and 40 years after the formation of the DRDO, India remains the largest importer of arms and military equipment in the world. A few years back, India imported 100,000 AK-47 rifles, a low technology item, because its own development of 5.56 rifle was lagging behind by many years. India continues to depend on import of a whole range of items, such as some categories of ammunition, snow clothing items, snow scooters, surveillance and gun locating radars, bullet proof jackets, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV); the list is unending. Recently it has entered into a defence deal with Russia for the purchase of T-90 tanks, SU-30, MK1 multi role aircraft, aircraft carrier (Admiral Gorshkov) and Cornet and Konkur anti-tank missiles. In addition, there are reports of possible import of six S-300 air defence systems from Russia, a dozen Mirage-2000 from France and Advance Jet Trainers from France/Britain. The army requires 1000-1500 more 155 guns. Most of the projects-- major as well as minor of the DRDO proved to be futile exercise. Major projects which either failed or were delayed are: Arjun tank, Advance Technical Vessel (ATV), Advance Light Helicopter (ALH), Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). Other low profile projects which achieved little or limited success are: Muffar (mortar locating radar), sharp shooter, amphibian dozer, engine for the Arjun tank, jet engine for the LCA, and so on.

The much-talked about Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) which was started in 1983 has only partially fulfilled its goals. In the next 10 years it was to design and develop five missiles—*Trishul*, *Akash*, *Nag*, *Prithvi* and *Agni*—to provide the nation a comprehensive missile based defence umbrella. After 17 years only the *Prithvi* has entered into service. *Agni*-I and II have been test-fired and are expected to be inducted by 2002. The other three—*Akash* and *Trishul* (both air defence missiles) and *Nag* (third generation anti-tank missile) which are relevant in the context of the MIL are nowhere in sight. These are still in development and test stage. The Indian Navy had to place an order for the Barak system developed by State-controlled Israel Aircraft Industries for use on its *Brahmaputra*-class of frigates, after the *Trishul*, a similar system being developed by India's DRDO was delayed. Similarly Pakistan also lacks latest technologies required for the MIL.

Mutual surveillance and intelligence are pre requisites of non-offensive military restructuring. For strong defensive military operations moves of enemy must be known in advance through surveillance and intelligence. These days both these activities have also become hi-tech affairs. Both India and Pakistan are poor in these. India's surprise nuclear tests in May 1998 are a poor reflection on Pakistan's surveillance and intelligence. Likewise Pakistan's intrusion into the Indian side of Line of Control (LOC) in Kargil sector of Kashmir in May 1999 was a great failure of Indian surveillance and intelligence.

Failure of CBMs

Next impediment is the failure of confidence building measures (CBMs) in South Asia. India and Pakistan agreed upon a number of formal and informal military confidence measures since 1980s that proved of a tactic acknowledgement to prevent conflict between two nuclear-capable states.[14] But the experiences of 1986-87, 1990 and 1999— when the two countries were on the verge of war— speak to the contrary, as almost all agreed-upon military CBMs between India and Pakistan have failed so far to de-escalate tensions and to build trust.[15]

Military CBMs, in short, consists of information measures, observation measures, deployment constraint measures and technology constrain measures. A few preconditions for the successful identification and implementation of military confidence building measures are: regular negotiations, continuous execution, transparency, parallel politico-socio-economic policies to create necessary environment for co-operation and political will of state parties to avoid conflict and to gradually build mutual trust. In the opinion of Samina Ahmed, “These essential preconditions for military CBMs does not prevail in the context of India and Pakistan. Nor do India and Pakistan favour, other than in rhetoric, the adoption of an integrated approach, military, political, social and economic to avoid conflict and to incrementally promote co-operation.”[16] Therefore, the utility of CBMs and consequent possibility of NOD and MIL remain limited.

Demilitarisation and disengagement are two important elements of the NOD and MIL. Both the hostile nations started with a militarised Line of Control (LOC) in Kashmir where there is a UN presence. They ended up with a militarised Line of Contact in Siachen and then a militarised boundary in the Sialkot-Samba area and after the aircraft incident in 1999 they have a militarised Sir Creek sector in south. “This encourages militarism, creates opportunities for exploitation and increases the chances of incidents, which can trigger reactions leading to major crises situation,” comments former Pakistan Army Chief General Karamat.[17]

Fundamentalism

Another great problem that has cropped up in South Asia as a result of growing fundamentalism and terrorism is that of proliferation of small and light weapons. These small and light weapons are causing the greatest damage to human life. From a virtual zero in the 1980s, there are now an estimated seven million seven hundred and thirty thousand AK-47's only on the loose in South Asia. If all types of guns including LMG's, UMG's and others are counted this figure could rise to around 4-5 times this figure. The core of weapons movement is the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. At a rough estimation, over 80% of the more than two hundred thousand killed in South Asia are civilians unconnected with fighting.[18] The problem of massive flow of small and light arms in this region is well explained by Radha Kumar. “The ready availability of these (relatively sophisticated) arms—which are used by most of the militant groups in the subcontinent--has escalated the conflicts both literally (more people get killed, the conflicts are protracted), and politically (the stakes continually increases as more and more interest groups get involved, such as the heroin mafia who are a legacy of the Afghan war).”[19] It has given rise to a culture of violence in the subcontinent.

Internal Problems

There are certain internal problems and intra-state insecurities that retard the prospects of the MIL too. There is close linkage between unstable internal politics of these states and their respective defence policies. For the last many years India is suffering from a number of separatist and secessionist movements such as in Kashmir, Punjab and north-eastern states. These movements get support and sustenance from outside especially Pakistan. During the eighties and early nineties India apprehended that Pakistan may provide military cover to radical Sikh militants or intervene militarily to separate Khalistan from India to avenge the separation of Bangladesh from it. Movement for separate state of Khalistan has now been largely controlled. Rebels in Northeast continue to create sporadic violence, bombings and killings. No doubt the problem is not as serious in Northeast to disintegrate India yet it requires military preparedness and presence there in good number. Kashmir continues to be a great problem. New Delhi asserts its sovereignty over the areas under its legitimate control and wants to complete the accession of Kashmir with India by taking back Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Islamabad is in no mood to budge. With the passage of time people of Kashmir have been divided—pro-India, pro-Pakistan and pro-liberation. Pakistan sends infiltrators, trained militants and *Mujahadeens* from Afghanistan to foment trouble in Indian Jammu and Kashmir. On Line of Control there are always military skirmishes and exchange of fire, which may any time lead to crisis, low-intensity conflict or full scale war. Examples of 1990 and 1999 are there. India does not want to be caught unaware like Kargil episode in May 1999. Hence all recent security reviews, task forces on defence matters, formation of National Security Council, Advisory Board, nuclear doctrine, missile tests, militarization, acquisition of new weapons from abroad and so on. The coalition government led by the BJP in India is more nationalistic and militaristic. It is interested to enhance India's security, international power and prestige by military might.

Pakistan equally suffers from intra-state strifes such as Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), Sunni-Shia sectarian violence in the Punjab and violence against minority Christian and Ahmadi religious groups elsewhere. Pakistan supported *Taliban* are not only committing excesses in Afghanistan but also creating internal problems in Pakistan by boosting fundamentalist forces and jeopardising its own internal security. India, Iran and now many other Western countries view *Taliban* as the creation of the Pakistani intelligence

Corruption

The problem of corruption raises further question about the sincerity of implementation of the MIL if it is ever adopted in these countries. The UN Development Programme, which releases its Human Development Report every year, cautioned in 1999 that corruption in South Asia was widespread and far more dangerous than in any other region because it occurred at the top and the guilty were rarely, punished. The report further said that corruption money had wings and was smuggled abroad to safe havens, that corruption often led to promotion and not prison.[20] A careful study of all the revelations by the *tehelka.com* team in India in early 2001 shows that almost every defence deal is stinking with scandal and riddled with kickbacks and commissions brazenly shared by political bosses, army officers,

bureaucrats and middlemen. India is spending a huge amount on its defence, and after the Kargil war a 2 per cent surcharge on income tax was levied. All this was in the name of strengthening India's defence by buying non-existent latest weapons, planes and armaments. But if a minimum of 10 to 15 per cent is the kickback in every deal it only means that this nation and its people are being cheated with impunity. This rampant corruption raises doubts that in every defence and technology deal for the execution of MIL there will be kickbacks and commissions and that will bring bad name to it.

Prospects

Discussion of the above problems presents a grim South Asian scenario that is not conducive for immediate military restructuring. In this section attempt is made not only to highlight the prospects of MIL despite the above limitations and problems but also to suggest measures to increase those prospects.

What Barry Buzan wrote a few years back is now proving to be a prophetic statement: "Although NOD policies have in theory a lot to offer in the settlement of regional conflicts such as those in the Middle East, the Gulf and South Asia, in practice the countries concerned will probably favour the pursuit of power for the foreseeable future. Until the desire for peace becomes stronger in these areas, NOD is unlikely to attract much interest." [21] This has exactly happened in South Asia in the late 1990s. Instead of adopting NOD, India and Pakistan preferred the pursuit of power by embarking upon a path of conventional arms, nuclear and missile race. They have become nuclear weapon states. In the same book Jasjit Singh says, "In fact, NOD offers an opportunity to stabilise the strategic environment, in spite of the nuclear proliferation that has taken place in the region." [22] No doubt NOD offers many proposals for peace and stability but countries of the region are not ready to accept this offer. These countries have yet to harness the abundant peace dividends of NOD and MIL.

To make military restructuring popular and adaptable in South Asia change is required in public images, identities, perceptions, values, attitudes and orientations concerning national security and defence in the 21st century. The concept has to operate on the levels of civil society (individuals and groups), political governance (the political elite) and the military environment (military personnel, researchers in military R & D, scientists and managers in the defence industry). The MIL involves social, political, cultural and psychological reorientation and change in the values of the public, the political elite, workers, managers, researchers in the defence industry, soldiers and military professionals in order to achieve civilisation of defence resources. The prospect for these changes is not bright and MIL has to wait for a long period. These changes have come in other regions especially Europe where march towards defence restructuring and conversion is going on. [23]

Military restructuring is a state-driven process as defence is the responsibility of the state though it might be also supervised by international organisations, which in some cases paves way for disarmament, demilitarisation or even conversion. Governments of these countries are not always interested in the MIL and related investment in conversion. No doubt they have joined the recent international disarmament

conventions like Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and are ready for talks for FMCT but have not joined the NPT and CTBT.

As the goal of MIL is not likely to be achieved in near future, these rival nations should focus on activities that appear to have changed aggressive defence into defensive defence and on to the extension of peace to the maximum possible areas. In South Asia MIL needs to be examined together where there is a social need for effective reallocation of defence resources to other social sectors with potential for development and growth. Jelusic suggests: "If there were reallocations inside the defence sector in order to establish more effective defence, or to achieve better use of scarce resources, it would be more correct to refer to this as defence restructuring." He further gives another suggestion which is worth emulating; "it is more convenient and cheaper for military organisations and the defence sector to adapt to 'non-military' technologies (such as information technology), in order to improve defence capabilities, rather than to stay with the traditional concept of a closed and heavily armed military." [24]

Prospects of the adoption of MIL greatly depend on improved relations between India and Pakistan; and India and China. Contrarily, by adopting MIL tension between the two can be lessened and relations improved. Both ways there is inter-connection between MIL and improvement of relationship. Without first resolving contentious issue like border dispute both India and China are improving relations in different areas. India and China have managed to keep peace along their Line of Control for nearly 12 years, whilst endeavouring to resolve the boundary question through dialogue. The approach may be applied to Kashmir between India and Pakistan. But India still pleads that its nuclear and missile development programme is in response not only to security threat from Pakistan but from mighty China. The latter has bigger offensive nuclear arsenal and long range missiles. India has only short-range missiles and still developing medium range missiles to meet the Chinese threat. Pakistan has to develop or acquire whatever India possesses. This way it is a triangular contest going on. To stop this some positive steps need to be taken in CBMs, arms control and MIL by China, India and Pakistan. China can reassure New Delhi about its strategic intentions and reduce India's perceived requirement for strategic defences. Simultaneously, the caravan of peace must continue its journey towards mutual understanding from Agra and find its destination in near future, as the Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh quipped after the India Pakistan summit talks (July 14-16) at Agra.

South Asia needs a culture of peace and a drastic change of attitudes. "The Line of Control (LOC) in Kashmir needs to become 'the Line of Peace' certainly till such time as a final solution is found. China and India have managed to keep their Line of Control as a Line of Peace, there is no reason why Pakistan and India cannot do likewise," suggests Admiral Ramdas former Commander-in-chief of the Indian Navy. [25]

To re-start Indo-Pak dialogue neither nuclear weapons nor Kashmir need be the pre-condition. A realisation that progress on Kashmir might take second place to developing confidence and a degree of interdependence is required on the part of Pakistan. Mutual interdependence may increase if India purchases power from Pakistan and if bilateral trade is increased. Interdependence reduces the scope of

conflict. India and Pakistan should enter into bilateral agreements and start depending on each other. Entering into economic, cultural, communication, military and other agreements where both could exploit each other in these spheres and establish good relations on the points they converge. The imperatives of globalisation tell both these rivals to normalise for better economic prospects for their people.

No doubt setting of these countries is different from European environment where NOD and MIL are quite successful yet a few examples may be followed and tried. A plan of three phases accepted by Warsaw Treaty Organisation in July 1988 may be followed to reach conventional stability. Firstly to abolish asymmetries of the most important weapons systems, secondly 25% reductions of troops and weaponry, and finally a change of the structure of the remaining forces towards pure defensiveness.[26] Later on further phases may be added such as capping of nuclear weapons programme and stopping missile development.

Previously, it was the contention of many experts that the NOD cannot be adopted unilaterally by any nation as war is an interaction of two or more countries. But after the unilateral reduction in forces and weapons by President Gorbachev in 1988 and subsequent success of NOD, the present author pleaded in a previous study[27] that NOD may be a success even if initially a nation adopts it unilaterally. In South Asian triangle who should then take lead in unilaterally adopting NOD—India or Pakistan or China? It is always better if a big and powerful country first takes such step to allay the fear of a small and less powerful state.

The NOD has evoked some interest in China. It has completed very drastic arms build-downs and large-scale demobilisation of more than a million troops in recent years. However, China is simultaneously following a path of militarisation and demilitarisation, defence conversion and defence conservation, military restructuring and military modernisation. Despite predominantly defensive posture, China's recent arms acquisitions and doctrinal changes seem to indicate that she is seeking enhanced power projection capabilities, in other words seeking to extend its offensive reach. Latest decisions of US President George W. Bush to supply sophisticated and lethal weapons to Taiwan and to restore high-level defence ties with India that were cut-off after May 1998 nuclear tests by India may compel China to go for offensive capabilities. Possibilities of setting up an India-China-Pakistan security arrangement as a long term 'safety net' and confidence building measure should also be explored.

India is the largest country and the major military power in South Asia and sets the trend for actions and reactions by others in the neighbourhood. Pakistan with its numerous problems looks to India to show the flexibility and magnanimity that can lead to positive and peaceful solutions for settling the outstanding disputes. Stephen P. Cohen, the US expert on South Asia also believes that the problems can be resolved "by a pre-emptive Indian policy of generosity and restraint. The Gujral Doctrine was one such effort, and the present government seems to be more solicitous of the concerns of India's neighbours (excepting Pakistan)."[28] If the present Prime Minister of India, Vajpayee can take bold steps like unilateral cease-fire in Kashmir, no-first use and voluntary moratorium on further tests then he should also take some initiative to adopt defensive defence posture. Pakistan amply responded all his above-mentioned bold steps. There is no reason why it will not

respond to NOD overtures from India. But prospects of this eventuality are not very bright in near future.

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