

U.S. POLICY ON KASHMIR DISPUTE IN THE POST-COLD WAR PERIOD

Abstract

The issue of Kashmir is not important for the U.S. but rather due to the fact that it involves two nations that have a strategic interest for the U.S.

For decades, the United States has been playing a significant role in the security scenario of South Asia. The security deficit and divided South Asia by the deep rivalry between India and Pakistan always had a serious concern for the Americans. United States time and again made efforts to defuse tension between India and Pakistan and bring them to dialogue for a peaceful settlement of contentious issues, Kashmir dispute in particular whose spillover as a nuclear flash point has put South Asia at risk of a nuclear conflict. The Americans never deemed this situation as advantageous for U.S. security interests in the area.

Though the U.S. security policy in South Asia fluctuated time to time in consistent with its interests in the region, Kashmir dispute always shared the U.S. security agenda in the region. The U.S. Kashmir policy is blend of two pronged strategy that on one hand worked to prevent the crises leading to war between India and Pakistan from escalation, and on the other hand it provoked New Delhi and Islamabad for dialogue on the issue.

With the end of Cold War period, the international political and security scenario was transformed and U.S. as a sole super power reoriented its international security policy goals. The U.S. Security policy in South Asia also took a major shift that affected its approach towards Kashmir dispute. This paper attempts to explore the reorientations of the U.S. policy on Kashmir in post- Cold War period.

Introduction

During the Cold War days, the United States –guided by its policy of securing a communism free world –was worried that the Kashmir dispute had become the main factor in fashioning the domestic and foreign policies of both India and Pakistan. It had all potentials to involve the super powers and turn itself in to a cold war conflict. The geostrategic location of Kashmir had aroused the interests of super powers. Soviet Union looked at it as a strategic area and a spring board of communism in South Asia. The Soviets felt that the future of Kashmir state had a direct bearing on Soviet Union’s interests in the region. They saw Kashmir as a leverage to enhance Soviet influence in India. Thus the Soviet

*Dr. Ahmad Ejaz, Assistant Professor at Pakistan, Study Centre, University of the Punjab, Lahore

leaders toed the Indian policy on Kashmir and called it integral part of India. On the other side, the Americans knew that if Soviets succeeded in establishing a military base in Kashmir, then the whole region of South Asia could not be kept out of the 'iron curtain.' So the U.S. interests in South Asia centered on the honourable settlement of the issue. The Americans believed that once this core problem was resolved, a new force could be built to check the influence of communism.

In the post- Cold War period, the U.S. adopted an India- centric policy that that led Washington to redesign its policy on Kashmir dispute, pursuing the Indian stand that Pakistan had been waging terrorism in Indian-held Kashmir through training, arming and infiltrating the terrorists across the Line of Control. The Indian claim emphasized that the situation in Kashmir constituted the most serious threat to India's territorial integrity and secular polity. India exploited the U.S. agenda for containment of the Islamic extremism. The Indian lobbies in United States attempted to convince the American policy makers on this point and asked the U.S. government to declare Pakistan as a terrorist state.¹ The American perception over the rise of Islamic fundamentalism lastly termed Kashmiri fighters as terrorists.² Accordingly, Pakistan came under severe pressure to stop the support of terrorist groups fighting in Indian part of Kashmir.

Departure from U.S. conventional policy was openly heralded on March 6, 1990 when the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, John H. Kelly, speaking to Congress Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific affairs of House Foreign Affairs Committee, said that the United States no longer adhered to its original policy of seeking a plebiscitary settlement of the dispute.³ In 1991, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Teresita C. Schaffer, during the Congressional hearings held jointly by the U.S. House of Representative Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs and the House Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations, referred Kashmir as an unstable region by terrorists' activities and condemned them and called upon to stop any external support.⁴ Supporting the Indian position, the United States went a step forward and threatened Pakistan that its name would be put on the list of the terrorist states if it did not abandon its policy of sponsoring the 'terrorists' in Kashmir. The U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in a letter to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif warned that Pakistan would be designated "as a terrorist state under a 1985 Congressional mandate if it did not cease and desist from aiding the Kashmiris."⁵

The BBC and the VOA reported in December 1992 that United States sought to include Pakistan's name in the list of countries which supported terrorism.⁶ However, in its final list which the State Department sent to the Congress on December 31, 1992, the name of Pakistan was not mentioned with other countries that according to U.S. perception supported international terrorism. However, on the charge of supporting separatists in Kashmir, Pakistan was "under observation" for four to six months.⁷ The U.S. State Department spokesman reported in January 1993 that the United States was:

concerned about the continuing reports of Pakistani support for Kashmiri militants who commit terrorist acts in India... and the US has raised

this issue frequently with the Pakistan government (and that was) aware of our views, and we hope they will take them into account.... and the United States was keeping the situation under active review.⁸

Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Siddique Kanju, referring to the situation, told the National Assembly of Pakistan that the U.S. government, for the "time being," had put off the matter of including the name of Pakistan in its list of countries sponsoring terrorism but the U.S. government had asked Pakistan to stop "backing freedom-fighters in (Indian) held Kashmir." Kanju said that the matter would be reviewed again after four to six months.⁹

Robin Raphel Task

Given the significance of U.S. post-Cold War agenda of interests in South Asia, the Clinton Administration, for the first time, created a full-fledged bureau in the State Department to deal with the South Asian affairs. Ms. Robin Raphel was appointed as the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia. This newly developed bureau had a pressing program which Ms. Raphel defined as:

1. Preventing war and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery,
2. Reducing tension and increasing the regional stability,
3. Promoting and strengthening democratic practices and institutions and increasing greater respect for human rights,
4. Enhancing military to military contacts and preserving unhampered maritime and naval transit rights,
5. Stamping out terrorism and banishing the production, trafficking and shipment of narcotics,
6. Promoting population planning and environment protection.¹⁰

Ms. Raphel elucidated that the United States had been facing tremendous challenges to achieve its interests in the region but, she asserted, "working to end South Asian conflicts-be it India-Pakistan tension or instability in Afghanistan-is an essential component of promoting U.S. interests in the subcontinent. It is the security interest in the region- stopping the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery."¹¹ She added that "one of my priorities will be to review the options for the U.S. and others to take a more active role in helping to promote the resolution of these conflicts."¹²

Since the insurgency in Indian-held Kashmir took a violent turn in 1989, the Kashmir dispute had caused further deterioration of the regional security situation. The military standoff between India and Pakistan in mid-1990 that, as it was expected, could any time turn into a nuclear showdown highlighted the gravity of Kashmir problem and nuclear capability of both countries. Consequently Kashmir dispute was started to be bracketed with other conflicts in the world. President George Bush enlisted Kashmir, as "one of the most dangerous issues on horizon."¹³ Similarly the U.S. President Clinton, in his speech to UN

General Assembly session in September 1993, mentioned Kashmir issue, as he said: “Bloody ethnic religious and civil wars rage from Angola, Caucasus to Kashmir.”¹⁴ By and large it was underlined that the scenario of nuclear proliferation and missiles race in the region was driven by the mounting hostility between India and Pakistan, primarily caused by the Kashmir issue. Nuclear proliferation had given new dimension to the dispute. It had emerged like a powder keg and a little flame could push the region to a nuclear clash.

CIA Director James Woolley in a testimony to the U.S. Senate on April 21, 1993, testified that Pakistan and India possessed the nuclear capability and an arms race between the two countries had made the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in future crisis between them.¹⁵ In a classified report to the U.S. Congress in May 1993, the Clinton administration with regard to regional nuclear proliferation in South Asia said that Pakistan and India had acquired the advanced technology of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile delivery systems. Most probably this nuclear capability of both nations could bring horrible results for the regional security.¹⁶ Likewise Ms. Raphel also addressing the Asia Society on February 9, 1994 said:

The Cold War may have passed but the historic rivalry between India and Pakistan persists and has grown more dangerous. Both countries are nuclear capable. Each is also apparently intent on acquiring ballistic missiles which could rain down weapons of mass destruction on the other. Large constituencies in both countries firmly believe that their nations’ security is best assured through a nuclear capability.¹⁷

However as a result of a big shift in the U.S. approach towards the South Asian regional security within the framework of its India-centric policy, Washington changed its conventional stand on Kashmir dispute and nuclear proliferation in South Asia. On both issues, Pakistan only was exhausted. The United States linked up the insurgency in Indian portion of Kashmir with the growing wave of Islamic military and Pakistan was underlined to be involved in cross-border terrorism. Pakistan’s nuclear programme was also marked dangerous for regional peace and security. The U.S. administration also relegated human rights concerns in Kashmir region to a low priority. In a testimony before congress on March 7, 1995, Robin Raphel praised Indian government’s measures to reduce the violence in Kashmir.¹⁸ The American government also acclaimed the Indian measure for holding elections in Kashmir and took it as a part of democratic political process in the state. It also underlined the militants for devastation of the state of human rights. The State Department human rights report 1996 said:

During 1996 India made further progress in resolving human rights problems. Following state elections in September and October, elected government was restored in Jammu and Kashmir for the first time in 6 years. Insurgency-related deaths were at the same level as last year, although the proportion of civilian deaths increased slightly apparently due to militant efforts to prevent elections and disrupt the newly elected government.¹⁹

The report further said:

Kashmiri militant groups were also guilty of serious human rights abuses. Terrorists attacked politicians in an effort to obstruct national parliamentary elections in May and June and state assembly elections in September. In addition to political killings and kidnappings, terrorists engaged in extortion and carried out acts of random terror that left hundreds of Kashmiris dead. Terrorist acts by Kashmiri groups have also taken place outside Jammu and Kashmir.²⁰

International media described the state elections for 6 Jammu and Kashmir Lok Sabha seats and 87 Indian occupied Kashmir Assembly seats held in May –September 1996, as a fraudulent exercise and termed election, “ballots through bullets,” and “voting under arms guns.”²¹ The American press also exposed the extent of coercion used by the Indian Security Forces. The *Washington Post* carried headline: “Troops force Kashmiris to vote.”²² *Time* commented: “The trickiest application of the hammer-and-ballot-box tactic has been in Kashmir.”²³ *The New York Times* wrote story with headline: “India sends in troops to make sure Kashmiris cast votes.” This dispatch continued saying: “Indian troops moved into villages and urban neighborhoods across the vale of Kashmir at dawn, rousing Muslims from their beds to vote.” The story added: “The message that India wanted to send to the world through elections appeared finally lost or at least heavily muffled.”²⁴ *Voice of America* (VOA) pronounced that the Kashmiris were being treated like animals and were forced to cast their votes and those opposing the sham elections were harassed by the Indian Army.²⁵

Frank Wisner’s Formula

Given the past record of failure of bilateral talks on Kashmir problem, there had been a firm view that stalemate over the issue could not let any peace effort to be result-oriented, for normalization between the two states. Thus the Americans presented a new idea of sidelining the Kashmir issue from the overall Pakistan-India relations. This new idea urged New Delhi and Islamabad for a ‘substantive economic interaction’ that might benefit the economies of both and be helpful to build confidence.²⁶ This idea for economic interaction without resolving the Kashmir issue was regarded as the bottom line of Clinton’s second term administration’s policy towards South Asia, which had been actually constructed within the prospect of the U.S. global trade and commercial interests which were subjected to political stability of the region.

Giving Kashmir a secondary position in frame of overall India-Pakistan relationship, it was assumed that the regulation of commercial relations between the two neighbours could help find resolution of the issue easily. The U.S. government assigned the task of brokering this new U.S.-sponsored formula to Frank Wisner- the U.S. Ambassador to India (1994-1997). Known as ‘Wisner plan,’ the formula emphasized:

1. India and Pakistan should give priority to their economic interests and cross-border trade should be regulated and expanded.
2. On Kashmir, ground realities should be realized.

3. Violence in the valley should be defused, which in Washington view had feathered many critical moments in the bilateral relations between the two states, pushing them to the brink of war and if this violence somehow was tamed, prospects could be brightened for dialogue for durable peace.²⁷

It was underscored that the violence in the valley could be best defused by co-opting the Kashmiri leaders into a political process. Wisner undertook a shuttle diplomacy. He held wide ranging talks with leaders at Islamabad and New Delhi, putting forward effectively the idea and trying to convince them about the economic benefits emerging out of the good relations between the two neighbours. He also underlined the losses that would result from doing otherwise. The Ambassador advised for cross border free trade. Throwing light on the notable feature of this package, speaking at Command and Staff College, Quetta, Wisner observed:

No effort to end the conflict in the state (Kashmir) will succeed until all concerned acknowledge that after nearly 50 years, there are certain fundamental realities that will not be changed. Acceptance of reality as it exists may provide a useful point of departure when serious discussion of the state's future begins, at the governmental level between India and Pakistan, and in talks between the Indian government and the Kashmiri interlocutors and one day between the Kashmiris.²⁸

Wisner's package stressed for the maximum autonomy for the Kashmir state as a substitute for the right of self-determination. It harped on: "Elections that could now take place for a state government in Jammu and Kashmir represent an alternative to the conflict that has produced six years of suffering and improvement for the people of Kashmir."²⁹ In fact, the Wisner's plan represented the Indian policy on Kashmir. It insisted to accept the 'reality' (Indian occupation of Kashmir) on the ground, agreeing to the grant of maximum autonomy and extending support to the elections in Kashmir. Wisner's plan, as expected, generated controversy, in the Pakistani circles. Wisner's remarks about 'fundamental realities' in Kashmir led to a wave of protest in Pakistan. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali described Wisner's proposal unrealistic and called him "a devil's advocate."³⁰ Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto discarded Wisner's plan and declared that the 'reality' was that the Kashmiri people would never "reconcile to an existence that compels their generations to live under Indian tutelage in perpetual servitude."³¹ The Kashmiri leadership, All Parties Hurriyat Conference, also showed resentment over Wisner's attempt for rehashing India's policy aimed at perpetuating India's control on the valley. Ambassador Wisner's formula was an indication that the United States had completely departed from its previous position on the Kashmir issue.

The U.S. policy makers knew that India would not change its stand on Kashmir. So they had resigned to the Indian stubbornness over the issue. A U.S. think tank report maintained that "unfortunately there is no right or plausible solution to the conflict in sight. India, Pakistan and Kashmiris themselves each have claims that cannot be reconciled. ... India should be urged to continue and accelerate moves to resurrect the political process in Kashmir ... and conduct

discussion with newly elected Kashmir government about the degree of autonomy for the State within the Indian constitution.”³²

Floating the idea of separating the Kashmir dispute from the other issues and removing politically motivated obstacles in bilateral commercial relations, Washington suggested both Islamabad and New Delhi to assign Kashmir a low priority in their agenda for a dialogue. The Indian government was happy with this new U.S. line of thinking. This new strategy - trade first and then Kashmir- was delineated in the Gujral doctrine, which laid emphasis on free and open commercial contacts between India and Pakistan.³³ The United States furnished an affluent acknowledgement to the Gujral doctrine. The U.S. policy makers and think-tanks made deliberate attempts to make Pakistan realize that trade links with India could be beneficial for Pakistan’s derailing economy.³⁴ Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif government in Pakistan which had evolved a strategy of liberalization of economy and integration of economic reforms took a soft stand in mending relations with India. Pakistan and India finally initiated an extensive dialogue process in March 1997 that lasted to the end of 1998 and held discussions on the issues, other than Kashmir. However, this new agenda of peace talks giving priority to trade, and tourism also could not make some way to success that might be serve as a confidence building base to create the necessary mutual goodwill to grapple with the complex issue of Kashmir. Differing perceptions on Kashmir also eclipsed the composite talks held in November 1998 in New Delhi on issues including economic and commercial cooperation, sir creek, wullar barrage, terrorism, drug trafficking, and promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields.³⁵

The U.S. efforts had been completely failed to resolve the South Asian nuclear complexity and create a non –proliferation regime in the region. The U.S. nuclear diplomacy was underlined as ‘discriminatory’ and ‘highhanded’ that could not deal fairly with the rising security dilemma of India and Pakistan. In fact India’s argument for its nuclear ambitions in counter of threat perception from China gave an inequitable twist to the U.S. approach towards South Asian nuclear impasse. The U.S. pressure on Pakistan to drop its nuclear option unilaterally also emphasized to detach Kashmir from nuclear issue.³⁶ The U.S. policy to deal exclusively with Pakistan’s nuclear programme also offered Pakistan F-16 aircrafts in return of an agreement for capping, reducing and finally eliminating its nuclear arsenals. Washington also tried to motivate Islamabad to give permission for on-site verification of its nuclear installations. Pakistan refused to accept unilateral capping of its nuclear programme, even in exchange of F-16 aircrafts. Pakistan also insisted on the linkage between Kashmir and nuclear issue.³⁷ Pakistan’s security expert PervaizIqbalCheema said that it was mandatory for Pakistan to carry on its nuclear option for its defence purposes. He said that Pakistan could never “match India’s conventional superiority, and given the nature of the conflictual cobweb of Indo-Pak hostilities, Pakistan’s nuclear option becomes the only ‘credible, effective and prudent deterrent against political and military bullying by India.”³⁸ He observed that the denuclearization in South Asia was possible after the resolution of Kashmir dispute.³⁹

The nuclearization of South Asia after the conduct of nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998 immediately increased explosiveness of Kashmir

dispute as a nuclear flash point. The linkage between Kashmir and nuclear proliferation in the region was reinforced when India after the explosions started threatening Pakistan over Azad Kashmir. There were statements by Indian leaders, including LalKrishanAdvani, who talked about hot pursuit across the LoC to find a lasting solution to the Kashmir issue. Advani warned: "Islamabad should realize the change in the geostrategic situation in the region and the world and roll back its anti-India policy, especially with regard to Kashmir." He added: "India's bold and decisive step to become a nuclear weapons state has brought about a qualitatively new stage in Indo-Pakistan relations, particularly in finding a solution to the Kashmir problem. It signifies India's firm resolve to deal firmly and strongly with Pakistan's hostile designs and activities in Kashmir."⁴⁰ Indian Union Minister for parliamentary affairs and tourism, MadanLalKhurana, warned Pakistan for fourth round. He said in Jammu on May 21: "If Pakistanis want to fight another war with us, they should tell us the place and time as we are ready for it...Pakistan should now think that India is also one among the nuclear powers in the world and our peace initiative should be taken for granted."⁴¹ He added that India had made an action plan to break the Pakistan's network of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. "We will destroy their camps and those helping sustenance of militancy in the state."⁴² Indian Prime Minister AtalBehari Vajpayee warned: "Pakistan should better give up the idea of snatching Kashmir."⁴³

Expressing concern over nuclearization of South Asia, the international community underlined the centrality of Kashmir as a nuclear flash point and stressed that security and stability in the region reliant on the settlement of this root cause of tension and arm race. The U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said that Kashmir issue had played a crucial role in the nuclearization in South Asia.⁴⁴ The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth notably observed the nuclearization of Kashmir issue. He said that after the nuclear explosions Kashmir issue "cannot be ignored." He added that the issue had emerged as a "flashpoint for another conflict in the subcontinent."⁴⁵ Reports prepared by the U.S. think-tanks also underscored the Kashmir dispute as a nuclear flash point in South Asia and emphasized the urgent need of its resolution. The Task Force report titled '*After the Tests*' co-sponsored by the Brookings Institution and the Council on Foreign Relations, pointed out Kashmir problem as the "most dangerous point of contention between India and Pakistan. It is the issue with the greatest potential to trigger a conventional or even nuclear war."⁴⁶ Henry L. Stimson Center's report titled 'Nuclear Risk-Reduction Measures in South Asia,' referring to the significance of Kashmir dispute in taking nuclear risk-reduction measures in South Asia, carried a study on 'Nuclear Risk-Reduction Measures in Kashmir.' The study prepared by Brian Cloughley highlighted that "the peace of the world may be more directly affected by the Kashmir problem in the nuclear era in the subcontinent."⁴⁷ The report of United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) underlined the danger of nuclear conflict at the borders of "disputed territory" of Kashmir.⁴⁸ The *International Herald Tribune* identified Kashmir question as "a potential flashpoint of the world's first nuclear exchange" and urged international community to address it.⁴⁹

China also showed concern on emerging security situation in South Asia, after nuclear blasts. China's Ambassador for disarmament affairs Li Changhe in a

statement linked Kashmir with peace and stability in the region. He urged international community to help facilitate a peaceful and just resolution of the issue.⁵⁰ Japan also observed that it had been responsibility of India and Pakistan to “have a constructive and concrete talks to find an equitable solution” of the Kashmir dispute.⁵¹ Similarly Britain Foreign Secretary Robin Cook was in row to underscore Kashmir as a “flashpoint for a nuclear war.” He asserted that the nuclear tests had proved that “there could be no peace in South Asia unless the two countries sat and resolved all thorny issues, including Kashmir.” He also added that nuclear explosions had “further highlighted the importance of Kashmir issue.”⁵² The UN Security Council resolution 1172 regarding nuclear test by India and Pakistan also recognized the Kashmir issue as root cause of tensions between the two neighbours.⁵³ The P-5 Foreign Ministers’ meeting held in June 1998 also in its recommendations underlined bitterness of Kashmir problem and as bitterness and accentuated for its resolution.⁵⁴

The nuclear capability of India and Pakistan increased the prospect of a nuclear war in South Asia. Given the gravity of the situation, the establishment of a nuclear restraint in South Asia was a dire need of time, but the India-United States strategic alliance had brushed off the environment for a nuclear non-proliferation in the region. Strobe Talbot’s series of talks (1998-1999) with leaders at New Delhi and Islamabad also failed to get some ground for a regional level agreement on nuclear issue. Though Strobe Talbot’s five point agenda of talks also underscored severity of the Kashmir issue and emphasized for its resolution.⁵⁵

Kargil Conflict

The ‘bus diplomacy’ furnished a turning point in India-Pakistan relations. The ‘Lahore Declaration’ as a result of Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee’s two-day visit to Pakistan in February 1999 established a new understanding to normalize the relations. It was widely appreciated as “a right step in a right direction.”⁵⁶ The Lahore Declaration emphasized to “take the immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence-building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict.”⁵⁷ Kashmir dispute was figured high on the agenda of talks and the Lahore Declaration called upon both signatories to intensify their efforts to resolve the issue.⁵⁸ The United States hailed the Declaration as helpful to “improve relations” between the two rivals and “lessen the likelihood of conflict.”⁵⁹ The U.S. President Clinton commended Nawaz Sharif and Vajpayee for “demonstrating courage and leadership by coming together and addressing difficult issues that have long divided their countries.” He further said: “South Asia - and, indeed, the entire world - will benefit if India and Pakistan promptly turn these commitments into concrete progress. We will continue our own efforts to work with India and Pakistan to promote progress in the region.”⁶⁰

The Lahore Declaration was breaking ground in India-Pakistan relations, but the eruption of an armed conflict in the Kargil and Drass sectors along the LoC damaged the whole spirit of the agreement. The clash had brought the two rivals on verge of a nuclear war. The United States which later played a very significant

role to prevent combat from intensifying further and finally ceased the conflict, called the situation as “most serious” and “risks spinning out of control.”⁶¹ The occupation of 29 peaks in Kargil and Drass sectors by militants with full support of Pakistani forces overlooking the national high way that connected Leh with Srinagar, provided Pakistan’s military planners a strategically important position to check the Indian army movements in the area. It posed a serious threat to the India’s supply routes to its armed forces stationed in the Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kargil crisis raised so much alarm worldwide and it was perceived as an extension of International Islamic terrorism. The world powers were convinced that the Kargil conflict had shaken the regional peace and security, secondly, it could disturb the status quo on the LoC and thirdly, the Kargil like situation could intensify the religious extremism that would dominate the political decisions of Pakistan leading to the ‘Talibanization’ of the country.⁶²

Pakistan came under fire for initiating this conflict through a secret military operation in the area with the help of militants belonging to the Taliban militia and other Islamic militant groups fighting in Kashmir.⁶³ The United States built pressure on Pakistan to defuse the situation through withdrawal of the militants from Kargil area. The U.S. State Department spokesman said that “we believe that all those who are fighting in Kargil are persons who crossed over from the Pakistani side and we want them back.”⁶⁴ President Clinton in a telephonic talk on June 15, 1999 urged Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif to pull out from Kargil.⁶⁵ The Clinton administration even warned for stoppage of installments of IMF loan to Pakistan, in case Pakistan did not step up to ask infiltrators to vacate the Kargil heights.⁶⁶ The U.S. Commander-in-Chief of CENTCOM General Tony Zinni came to Pakistan in later half of June and extended some kind of warning that “if you do not pull back, you are going to bring war and nuclear annihilation down on your country. That is going to be very bad news for everybody.”⁶⁷

On July 1, 1999, the U.S. Congress Committee for Foreign Relations adopted a resolution denouncing Pakistan for precipitating Kargil conflict and urged President Bill Clinton to oppose the release of IMF, World Bank and Asian Development Bank loans to Pakistan unless Pakistan-backed forces were withdrawn. Condemning Pakistan for financial and military support to armed incursions into Jammu and Kashmir, the resolution also endorsed Indian military response to push back the terrorists and Pakistan military forces and asked the U.S. Administration to work for the withdrawal of the Pakistan-backed intruders.⁶⁸ The United States also accepted the Indian option to cross the international border in case of Pakistan’s failure to withdraw adventurists from Kargil.⁶⁹ The U.S. line of thinking over the Kargil issue gave diplomatic jerk to Pakistan, and finally derived Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to hold meeting with President Clinton in Washington on July 4, 1999. Both the leaders signed ‘Washington Declaration’ which focused on the cessation of fighting on Kargil heights and restoration of respect of LoC and revival of bilateral dialogue in the spirit of Lahore Declaration to resolve the contentious issues, including Kashmir.

President Clinton’s assurance for taking personal interest in intensifying the bilateral efforts to resolve the Kashmir dispute was greater development that

the Pakistanis accepted cheerfully but the Indians who had not acknowledged the linkage between the Kargil crisis and Kashmir issue showed dismay over Clinton's pledge to promote India-Pakistan dialogue to seek some solution of the Kashmir issue. They perceived Clinton pledge as a base for some kind of mediation.⁷⁰ However President Clinton himself cleared: "We want to be a force for peace, but we cannot force peace. We cannot impose it. We cannot and will not mediate or resolve the dispute in Kashmir." He added that only Pakistanis and Indians "can do that through dialogue."⁷¹ The Kargil clash was the first military confrontation in a nuclearized South Asia. It not only transformed the strategic environment in the region, but demonstrated that Kashmir was a dangerous issue that would persistently continue as a nuclear flash point, providing ground for Kargil like conflicts. Kargil crisis made things worse for Pakistan. As the international community did not support Pakistan's adventure in Kargil region, the whole connotations of Pakistan's case on Kashmir accordingly were spoiled. Pakistan appeared as an aggressor, intruder, and a state that sponsored terrorism across the borders. While on the other side, Kargil conflict had profound impact on India-United States relations. Bruce Riedel, a U.S. leading expert on U.S. national security stated: "Doors opened in New Delhi to Americans that had been shut for years. The Indian elite-including the military –and the Indian public began to shed long held negative perceptions of the United States. The stage was set for the unprecedented back to back summits between President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee in 2000".⁷²

By late December 1999, the forces of the two countries had not yet been completely withdrawn from the borders, the Kashmiri rebels hijacked an Indian Airline plane. The Indian government accused Pakistan for orchestrating the hijacking. Hijackers landed in Afghanistan and demanded the release of Kashmiri militants imprisoned in Indian jails. Consequently, the release of Maulana Masood Azhar, a leader of *Harakat –ul-Mujahideen* (HUM) a Pakistan-based radical Kashmiri group, took place and hijacking drama was finally ceased. The United States also confirmed the involvement of HUM in the hijacking.⁷³ Tension soared between Pakistan and India. Their forces once again were put on red alert. The cross-border firing increased unabatedly. The clash along the LoC had escalated the tense situation that could lead to an open war, involving the nuclear weapons. The murder of 35 Sikhs in Anantnag district in Indian occupied Kashmir on March 20, 2000 by unidentified militants increased violence in the area.

Since the end of Kargil conflict, India had gained much on diplomatic front. On the other side Pakistan's policy of supporting the Taliban militia and Kashmiri insurgents had received an adverse response on world level. Pakistan was termed as a sponsor and promoter of terrorism, while India was described as a victim of it. The formation of a U.S.-India joint working group on terrorism in February 2000 was a substantial development against tendency of terrorism in South Asia.

The U.S. President Clinton's visit to South Asia in March 2000 represented a strategic shift in the U.S. policy towards the area, by marginalizing Pakistan, and courting India. The 'US-India Vision Statement for 21st century' gave an upbeat direction to Washington-New Delhi relations. President Clinton's

tour of South Asia also sketched out an exclusive policy to address the Kashmir issue. This U.S. Kashmir policy was based on ‘four Rs’ strategy: ‘restraint’ by India and Pakistan, ‘respect’ for the LoC, ‘rejection’ of violence, and ‘renewal’ of India-Pakistan dialogue.⁷⁴ Evolving the U.S. Kashmir policy, President Clinton called Kashmir region “the most dangerous place in the world”,⁷⁵ and said that it was “a stark truth” that there was no “military solution to Kashmir”.⁷⁶ Clinton further added that there must be a “process by which the Kashmiri legitimate grievances are addressed”. He affirmed his support to such process, but ruled out the U.S. intervention in the dispute. He said in this regard: “I am not going to be dragged in to something that India’s does not want us to be part of”.⁷⁷ He also supported India’s stance of involving Pakistan in cross-border terrorism, and said: “I believe that there are elements within the Pakistani government that have supported those who engaged in violence in Kashmir”.⁷⁸

Kargil conflict had been terminated but tension had not been lowered on borders. The U.S. diplomacy once again functioned successfully to bring temperature down in New Delhi and Islamabad, and create a conducive climate to revitalize the stalled peace process. Accordingly developments appeared including Indian government’s declaration of a six –month long unilateral ceasefire, halt to offensive military operations in Kashmir and commencement dialogue process with Kashmiri militant groups. Pakistan also announced that its forces deployed along the LoC would observe “maximum restraint”.⁷⁹ This course of actions finally culminated in persuading New Delhi and Islamabad for resumption of talks.

Agra Summit held between President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee in July 2001 broke two year deadlock but could not make progress because of Kashmir dispute. For future agenda of talks, Pakistan wanted to include Kashmir as a main issue, while India refused to acknowledge the centrality of Kashmir dispute to future talks, and instead, stressed on cross border terrorism. As both leaders could not even find a common ground for future agenda of talks, summit was over without a joint declaration.

Terrorism in Kashmir

The unproductive summit turned the regional security situation gloomier. The tragic events of terrorist attacks on the State Assembly building in Srinagar on October 1, 2001 and the Indian parliament on December 13, 2001 brought the India-Pakistan relations to the lowest ebb. India blamed Pakistan-based militant groups for these actions. India called back its High Commissioner from Pakistan and terminated rail and bus links. India also moved its forces to the forward position along the borders with Pakistan. Pakistan reciprocated in the same manner. The military standoff had generated dangers of an all-out conflict.⁸⁰

Since the United States had started a hot pursuit of terrorists involved in terrorist attacks in Washington and New York on September 11, 2001, India also tried to exploit the world mood against Pakistan, portraying a Kashmir-Taliban-Osama-Pakistan nexus. India argued that this nexus had launched a terrorist

upheaval in Kashmir that was largely linked up with religious fanatic Taliban movement in Afghanistan, and other militant groups based in Pakistan. Holding Pakistan-based militant organizations, *Lashkar-e-Tayyeba* and *Jaish-e-Muhammad* in particular, which were fighting in Kashmir, responsible for attacks on the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly and the Indian parliament, Indian government asked the U.S. government to deal with Pakistan in the same way as Afghanistan, for harboring terrorist organizations, inimical to India. The U.S. government appeared to acknowledge the Indian viewpoint, but it did not support the Indian military adventure against Pakistan. The ultimate reason was engagement of Pakistan in war against terror, combatting in Afghanistan and on Pakistan's western borders.⁸¹ However, on Indian demand, the United States declared *Lashkar-e-Tayyeba* and *Jaish-e-Muhammad* as terrorist organizations under the U.S. law and blocked their assets.⁸² The U.S. government piled diplomatic pressure on Pakistani government to curtail the free movement of militant groups in Pakistan. Pattern of Global Terrorism 2000, the annual report of U.S. State Department on terrorism, mentioned about the militant groups fighting in Kashmir which operated freely in Pakistan. The report also cited *Lashkar-e-Tayyiba*, and *Jaish-e-Muhammad*.⁸³

The report of U.S. National Commission on Terrorism titled 'Background and Issues for Congress,' released on February 6, 2001 described that Pakistan provided "safe havens to terrorists, and moral, political, and diplomatic support to several groups engaged in terrorism."⁸⁴ Similarly report of Congressional Research Service Study (CRS) titled 'Terrorism: Near Eastern Groups and State Sponsors, 2002,' issued in February 13, 2002, described the Pakistan's links with radical organizations including *Hakat-ul-Mujahideen*, *Jais-e-Muhammad*, *Lashkar-e-Tayyiba*, and *Harkat-ul-Jihad-i-Islami*. The study said that these organizations based in Pakistan were fighting in Kashmir to "seek the end of Indian control" of the region. These groups were "composed of militant Islamist Pakistanis and Kashmiris, as well as Arab veterans of the Afghan war against the Soviet Union who view the Kashmir struggle as a jihad"⁸⁵ Jessica Stern, an American expert at the Harvard University said that Pakistan-based Islamic militant groups had started crusade in Indian-held Kashmir to "bring all of Kashmir under Pakistani control." She added: "These Pakistani militant groups pose a long-term danger to international security, regional stability, and especially Pakistan itself. Although their current agenda is limited to 'liberating' Kashmir, which they believe was annexed by India illegally, their next objective is to turn Pakistan into a truly Islamic state. Islamabad supports these volunteers as a cheap way to keep India off balance."⁸⁶ Stephen Philip Cohen said that "Pakistan cultivated its own home-grown Islamic radicals."... "A variety of Kashmir-oriented groups" were permitted to operate in Kashmir from Pakistan's territory.⁸⁷

However, the Indians were not satisfied with the U.S. policy of persuading Pakistan to crackdown on the terrorists groups operating on Pakistan's soil. So they constantly had been piling pressure on U.S. government 'to do more.'

Kashmir like Afghanistan and tribal area of Pakistan had also been bracketed by the Americans as a zone where Islamic militants were waging their activities. Pakistan's policy in Afghanistan and free mobility of Islamic terrorist groups fighting in Indian occupied Kashmir caused to dub Pakistan for supporting

and extending terrorism in Kashmir. Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000, the U.S. State Department annual report on terrorism, released in April 2001, mentioned that Pakistani government supported Kashmir insurgency. It quoted: "Kashmiri militant groups operate in Pakistan, raising funds and recruiting new cadre. Several of these groups were responsible for attacks against civilians in Indian-held Kashmir."⁸⁸

Post 9/11 international political and security environment had suited much to India to intensify its efforts to establish linkage between the Kashmir insurgency and international tide of terrorism. The Indians fully exploited the opportunity. In a statement on September 16, 2001, the Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani said that the "world cannot disregard the fact that over a decade, Pakistan and now Taliban have been promoting terrorism. They have been giving refuge and asylum to all those indulging in terrorist violence."⁸⁹ During the India-EU summit in November 2001, the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee said that Pakistan had not stopped sponsoring the cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, despite being a partner in the international coalition against terrorism.⁹⁰ India asked United States to force Pakistan to take stern action against various *jihadi* organizations, involved in activities in Kashmir and other parts of India. During his visit to Washington in October 2001, the Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh convinced the Americans that the United States had no option but to address the operations in Kashmir.⁹¹ On another occasion, giving message to the U.S. leaders, Jaswant Singh said that "our fight against terrorism did not start on September 11, we have been fighting this battle alone for years. Pakistan has spawned, encouraged and sustained terrorist activities in Kashmir."⁹² The Indian leaders openly sneered Pakistan's role in the international war against terrorism. India also pondered Pakistan as a fit case for a pre-emptive strike.⁹³

The terrorist attacks on the State Assembly in Srinagar on October 1, 2001, and the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001 gave a more violent turn to the relations between India and Pakistan. India pointed finger at Pakistan-based terrorist groups for these acts. Consequently Indian assertion about cross border terrorism became so intense. The Vajpayee government withdrew its Ambassador from Islamabad, suspended India's road and air links with Pakistan, and asked Pakistan to hand over twenty wanted terrorists living in Pakistan responsible for these deadly acts. Pakistan's government expressed its regretful concern on the sad events and denied any kind of role in them. However, India adopted a tone towards Pakistan similar to that of the U.S. towards Taliban government in Afghanistan. The Indian leaders gave statements implying to destroy the training camps of the militants based in Azad Kashmir. L. K Advani warned that the U.S. strategy of pre-emptive strike and hot pursuit could be used against Pakistan.⁹⁴ Indian Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met on December 15, 2001, and decided to take military action. On January 14, 2002, orders were issued to mobilize and deploy troops and other military assets along the LoC and international borders with Pakistan, to launch an attack against the terrorist camps in Azad Kashmir. The Indian mobilization of troops was named as 'Operation Parakram.'⁹⁵ India gave message to international community that Pakistan should be treated in the same manner as Afghanistan, for harboring terrorists groups. In response, Pakistan mobilized its own forces.

The United States which considered Kashmir as a terrorism- run area condemned the attacks on the assembly building in Srinagar and the Indian parliament and called it a shocking action. On the request of India, Pakistan-based terrorist organizations like *Laksher-I-Tayyaba* and *Jaish-i-Muhammad* were black listed as terrorist groups and leaders of these organizations including Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, MulanaAzharMasood and Farooq Kashmiri were declared as dangerous persons. British government also banned twenty-one terrorist organizations including *Lashkar-e-Tayyba*, *Jaish-e-Mohammad*, and *Hakart-ul-Mujahideen* which were active in Kashmir.⁹⁶

The Bush administration also increased pressure on President Musharraf to crack down on the terrorist network in Pakistan. Finally Pakistan took a U turn in its policy on Kashmir. President Musharraf's speech on January 12, 2002 announced stern measures to curb the extremist groups and banned a number of organizations including *Lashkar-e-Tayyba* and *Jaish-e-Mohammad*.

War threat of 2002

The international community welcomed Pakistan's shift in its Kashmir policy but New Delhi was not satisfied with President Musharraf's decision to curtail terrorism. The Indian leaders' response to Musharraf's speech made on February 12, 2002 was cold and they brushed aside Pakistan's efforts to crack down on the *Jihadi* organizations, as cosmetic and façade. On May 22, 2002, the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee in a letter to the American President Bush conveyed India's assessment.⁹⁷ Similarly on June 4, 2002 Vajpayee, addressing at the Almaty Conference, accused Pakistan for not meeting its commitment to halt terrorism and disclosed that Pakistan-backed infiltrators were still continuing their activities in India.⁹⁸

The Vajpayee government expelled the Pakistan Ambassador to India, withdrew its diplomatic personnel from Islamabad, and banned Indian airspace for Pakistani commercial air flights. It moved eight-hundred thousand troops close to the LoC and on May 22, Prime Minister Vajpayee, visiting troops in the front-lines in the District of Kupawara, Kashmir, called for a 'decisive battle.' President Musharraf responded by moving a half million of his troops to the borders and on May 27, warned India: "If war is thrust upon us, we will respond with full might, including the use of nuclear weapons." The escalating tension prompted British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, U.S. Deputy of Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, to visit both Pakistan and India in May-June 2002. Bush also called both leaders to plead for restraint.

The 2002 military standoff between India and Pakistan created a worrisome situation similar both countries had already gone through in 1987, 1990, and 1999. The situation was ready for a nuclear clash.⁹⁹ Both sides had moved ballistic missiles close to each other's border. The mortar and artillery fire was reported on Kashmir border.¹⁰⁰

The crisis pushed again the Bush administration into full-swing diplomatic action. The eruption of war between India and Pakistan at this crucial juncture was seen detrimental for war against terrorism, on western borders of

Pakistan. The Americans could not afford it. The main concern of the United States was to keep the Pakistani troops busy in hunting terrorists on Pakistan's western borders with Afghanistan. So, in case of a conflict on its eastern borders, Pakistan had to shift its war machinery from the western borders. This situation could be disastrous for U.S. efforts for hot pursuit of the terrorists. Therefore, the United States came across to stave off the situation from further escalation. The U.S. efforts for defusing crisis had three objectives:

1. Prevailing situation between India and Pakistan should not escalate in to a nuclear exchange.
2. The deteriorating situation should not affect Pakistan's support to the U.S. war against terrorism in Afghanistan.
3. The resolution of the Kashmir issue was vital for America to maintain good relations with both Pakistan and India.¹⁰¹

The U.S. crisis preventive diplomacy took place in January 2002. Besides the U.S. official maneuvering in Islamabad and New Delhi, President Bush made personal appeal to both combatants to avoid war. On May 30, 2002, during the height of the crisis, President Bush was reported to have said that "war would not serve their interests." Bush said that the incursion across the LoC must be stopped." He said that Pakistani President Musharraf "must do so." Bush reminded Musharraf of his commitment and said that "we and others are making it clear to him that he must live up to his word."¹⁰²The United States adopted a three-pronged strategy to defuse this conflict:

1. Pressing Pakistan to end the cross-border infiltration into the Indian part of Kashmir,
2. Urging India to exercise maximum restraint,
3. Encouraging India and Pakistan for initiating dialogue process.¹⁰³

There was tremendous pressure on Pakistan to do more to rein in the terrorist groups and prevent them from causing trouble in Kashmir. The United States also asked India to show restraint and to initiate talks with Pakistan, with a view of de-escalation along the common borders. The crisis persisted through the successive months as India continued to insist that its conditions must be met before it would withdraw its forces from international borders and the LoC. However, the American diplomacy successfully worked to cool down the situation and both countries finally started to demobilize their forces along the borders. A report of the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) of May 29, 2002 estimated the cost of conflict if it had been broken out. The report said that the war between India and Pakistan could lead to about 10 million deaths initially.¹⁰⁴ However, the Indian claims for cross-border infiltration of terrorists from the Pakistani side continued to seize the security situation of the area. The United States also sympathized with the Indian concerns and applied pressure on Pakistan to do more to stop cross-border infiltration. Richard Boucher, the U.S. State Department spokesman, said that Pakistan had not fully fulfilled its commitment to stop

incursions inside the Indian-held Kashmir.¹⁰⁵ The U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan, Nancy Powell, also put forward the U.S. government policy that Pakistan should fulfill its commitment to stop infiltration in the Indian side of Kashmir.¹⁰⁶

Ignoring close partnership with Pakistan in war against terror, the Bush administration continued pressure on Pakistan to curtail the cross-border terrorism. Indian hard attitude had linked up the resumption of talks with Pakistan with the total elimination of the cross-border terrorism. However, the U.S. efforts finally worked to convince the Indian leaders to soften their stand. Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee said “if credible steps are initiated against terrorism”, India would start peace talks.¹⁰⁷ During his meeting with President Mushrraf at Camp David on June 24, 2003, President Bush asked him to redouble his efforts to stop the cross-border terrorism. Bush declined also Musharraf’s request to play a mediatory role in the Kashmir dispute.¹⁰⁸ During the September-October 2003 UN General Assembly’s fifty-eighth session, Bush’s meeting with Musharraf and Vajpayee yielded better results. Both leaders also met during the 12th SAARC summit held in Islamabad in January 2004, and agreed to take step forward towards normalization between their countries. Pakistani President held out the assurance to the Indian Prime Minister that “he will not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.” They agreed to commence the process of the composite dialogue and were confident that the resumption of the composite dialogue would lead to a peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.¹⁰⁹ Pakistan and India started composite dialogue on foreign secretary- level on February 16-18 2004 and agreed on a road map for peace.

The composite dialogue lasted five years, during which the public diplomatic gestures of Indian and Pakistani leadership facilitated discussion and softened attitudes among civil society and the media on both sides. The progress of the composite dialogue was derailed after the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks. Terrorist acts blocked the channel of talks and outstretched the mistrust between New Delhi and Islamabad. India claimed that terrorists belonged to the Pakistan-based *Jamat-ud-Dawah* (JuD) and its chief Hafiz Saeed was mastermind of Mumbai terrorist attacks. Indian authorities asked Pakistani government to handover Hafiz Saeed to them for judicial trial. Pakistani government denied the Indian demand and asked Indian government to provide strong evidences against the Mumbai attacks’ suspects so that Pakistan could be able to take effective action against them.

The matter drew a straining situation between the two countries and started a war of words over Hafiz Saeed issue. India said that it had provided evidences regarding the involvement of chief of *Jamat-ud-Dawah* in Mumbai attacks but Pakistani government had ignored them and did not want to arrest him just for its own vested interests. While Pakistani authorities said that evidences did not prove his involvement in the terror act. Pakistani government arrested Hafiz Saeed but because of lack of evidence a criminal proceeding was not made against him and court finally released him. Undoubtedly the Americans sympathized with the Indians and were not satisfied with the measures taken by Pakistan in this case. Washington pressurized Islamabad to cooperate with New Delhi to punish the non-state actors blamed for the Mumbai terror attacks. On June 25, 2014, United

States named Hafiz Saeed as a terrorist and placed *Jamaat-ud-Dawa* in the list of banned Foreign Terrorist Organization, as an affiliate of *Lashkar-e-Tayyiba* (LeT). The U.S. had already declared LeT as Foreign Terrorist Organization in 2001. In 2012 the U.S. also designated Hafiz Saeed as a terrorist and offered \$ 10 million bounty against him for his alleged role in the Mumbai terror attacks. The UN Security Council also in 2008 titled Hafiz Saeed as a terrorist and declared *Jamat-ul-Dawa* as a terrorist organization.¹¹⁰

Mumbai terrorist attacks had highlighted the urgent need for India and United States to enhance cooperation to work more closely to counter terrorism on regional and global level. They decided to accelerate the function of Counterterrorism Joint Working Group (CTJWG) established in 2000. Both sides' officials believed that the increasing collaboration in term of exchange of information, training material and methods related to interrupting terrorist financial networks, institutional and law enforcement steps to strengthen homeland security, border management and surveillance techniques, aviation security, and disaster management in a terrorist incident involving weapons of mass destruction could helpful in combatting terrorism. The U.S. commitment with India to work closely to combat terrorism obviously retained Kashmir issue under the U.S. focus. The U.S. Kashmir policy consistently emphasized on:

- Pressing Pakistan to do more to stop infiltration in to Indian controlled Kashmir region, including rein in the non-state groups waging terrorism.
- Supporting a bilateral dialogue process between India and Pakistan. Pressing Pakistan to modify its negotiating stance that might help make progress on Kashmir, a precondition for addressing the other India-Pakistan issues.
- Urging both countries for de-escalation along the LoC, expanding trade links, easing movement of people, and reducing hate propaganda.
- Pressing India to exercise maximum restraint.
- Stressing India to do more to reduce the level of activity of Indian security forces in Kashmir and improve the record of human rights there.

Obama administrations upheld the gravity of Kashmir problem. Its Kashmir policy however was also within parameters pursued by the Bush administration. During his election campaign for presidency in 2008, Barak Obama referred the Kashmir issue as one of the acute tasks for his U.S. administration, and he said that without resolving disputes between Pakistan and India, there would be no peace in Afghanistan. Talking to *MSNBC* News few days before election, in October 2008, Presidential candidate Obama said:

The most important thing we are going to have to do with respect to Afghanistan is actually deal with Pakistan. And we have got work with the

newly elected government there in a coherent way that says, terrorism is now a threat to you. Extremism is a threat to you. We should probably try to facilitate a better understanding between Pakistan and India and try to resolve the Kashmir crisis so that they can stay focused not on India, but on the situation with those militants.¹¹¹

He also said in an interview with *Time* (Magazine) that “working with Pakistan and India to try to resolve [the] Kashmir crisis in a serious way” would be a critical task of his administration. Obama said that he knew the issue was “obviously a tar pit diplomatically.” However, he maintained that “there is a moment when potentially we could get [the Indians’ and the Pakistanis’] attention.” He added: “It would not be easy, but it is important.”¹¹² It was possibly for the first time that a U.S. presidential nominee had raised the Kashmir problem in a national political campaign. Obama referred that the end of India-Pakistan conflict over Kashmir could be main key to create peace and stability in South Asian region and win the war on terror. In his interview, Obama talked about the appointment of a “special envoy in there (Kashmir), to figure out a plausible approach.”¹¹³ Viewing Kashmir as a bilateral issue, the Indians do not accept any outside interference. So they were alarmed at Obama’s unexpected interest in the issue. However on the other hand Pakistanis and Kashmiris alienated from Indian rule had welcomed Obama’s comments, because they believed that without the involvement of the international community no serious initiative could be taken to resolve the dispute.

Obama administration’s decision to appoint Richard Holbrook, a veteran diplomat, as a special envoy of the U.S. President with a new task in South Asia had caused great dismay in New Delhi. The Indians feared that Holbrooke’s mandate, extending to India-Pakistan relations, would exceed to Kashmir. So Indian lobby in Washington exercised its influence on Obama administration to cut the Holbrook’s agenda, and that was finally minimized to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

President Obama shunned his previous approach on Kashmir issue, because he also like predecessors did not want Kashmir to become a stumbling block to progress in developing the close ties with India. During his visit to India in 2010, Obama’s phrase on Kashmir delighted the Indians. He said:

...Obviously this is a long-standing dispute between India and Pakistan. As I said yesterday, I believe that both Pakistan and India have an interest in reducing tensions between the two countries. The United States cannot impose a solution to these problems, but I have indicated to Prime Minister Singh that we are happy to play any role that the parties think is appropriate in reducing these tensions. That is in the interest of the region, it is in the interests of the two countries involved, and it is in the interest of the United States of America. So my hope is that conversations will be taking place between the two countries. They may not start on that particular flashpoint (Kashmir). There may be confidence-building measures that need to take place. But I am absolutely convinced that it is in both India’s and

Pakistan's interest to reduce tensions and that will enable them I think to focus on the range of both challenges and opportunities that each country faces.¹¹⁴

This statement may indicated a show of support for India as it has always took position that no outside forces be involved in the settlement of the Kashmir dispute.

In the joint statement, President Obama also shared views with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and stated that "success in Afghanistan and regional and global security require elimination of safe havens and infrastructure for terrorism and violent extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan." They also stressed on that "all terrorist networks, including *Lashkar- e-Tayyaiba*, must be defeated and called for Pakistan to bring to justice the perpetrators of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks."¹¹⁵ Obama administration clearly dismissed the plea of Pakistani government for U.S. intervention on Kashmir dispute. During his official trip to U.S. in October 2013, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif urged U.S. to use its influence over India to resolve the Kashmir problem. An Obama administration's Senior Official said: "On Kashmir, our policy has not changed an iota." It was up to India and Pakistan to determine the "pace, scope and character of their dialogue on Kashmir".... "We have been very encouraged by steps that both India and Pakistan have taken to resolve issue." He added: "Clearly we would be concerned about the terrorist groups that would derail that dialogue process."¹¹⁶

The U.S. Kashmir policy represented basically a hands-off, cheer-from-the sidelines approach that made it clear that the United States would adopt a more robust attitude only if India wanted it to.

Conclusion

The security deficiency in South Asia is mainly caused by the chronic traditional hostility between India and Pakistan and its main source is Kashmir dispute. As the US concerns in South Asia moved around the security of the region, it emphasized the stability of the region which is believed to be possible through the betterment in relations between India and Pakistan. U.S. likes to involve two nations that are of a strategic value to it.

Though the U.S. policy on Kashmir was linked to its security interests in the region and constantly transformed time to time with shift in its security options South Asia. However the Americans always acknowledged dispute over Kashmir and adopted a policy of encouraging India and Pakistan for a peaceful resolution of it. The U.S. crisis preventive diplomacy effectively functioned on different occasions and pushed both countries to talk on Kashmir instead they went to war. Third party mediation in the dispute is ruled out. India has always opposed the involvement of outside forces in the settlement of the dispute, therefore United States persistently asserted regarding its limits that it could not impose a solution to the problem, and flatly ruled out any mediation in the Kashmir dispute, despite request from Pakistan.

Notes and References

-
- ¹ *Indian Express*, March 4, 1990.
- ² U.S. State Department's annual report, 'Pattern of Global Terrorism 1990,' available at: www.fas.org/isb/threat/terror_90/index.html
- ³ Robert G. Wirsing, *India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir dispute on Regional Conflict and its Resolution*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 220.
- ⁴ Syed Adeeb, "Human rights in South Asia," *The Frontier Post*, August 26, 1991.
- ⁵ Theodore P. Wright, Jr; "U.S. Perception of Islam in the Post-Cold War Era: The Case of Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of American Studies*, Islamabad: Area Study Centre for Africa, North & South America , Vol.11, No.2, (Fall 1993), 30.
- ⁶ *The Nation*, December 15, 1992.
- ⁷ *Dawn*, January, 10, 1993; *The News*, February 11, 1993.
- ⁸ *Dawn*, January, 10, 1993.
- ⁹ *The Nation*, January 14, 1993.
- 10 *Dawn*, Lahore, July 18, 1993, and February 6, 1994.
- 11 Ahmad Ejaz, "Peace and Stability in South Asia: Robin Raphel's Pressing task," *The Muslim*, Islamabad, November 23, 1994.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, March 3, 1990
- 14 *Dawn*, Lahore, September 23, 1993.
- 15 *The Nation*, Lahore, May 11, 1993.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ahmad Ejaz, "Peace and Stability in South Asia: Robin Raphel's Pressing Task."
- 18 Human Rights Watch: World Report 1996. Available at: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/WR96>
http://pantheon.hrw.org/reports/1996/WR96/Asia-04.htm#P410_119435
- 19 India Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1996, the U.S. Department of State, available at: http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1996_hrp_report/india.html
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 *The Nation*, Lahore, June 2, 1996.
- 22 *Washington Post*, Washington, May 24, 1996.
- 23 *Time*, (Weekly Magazine) New York, Vol. 148, No. 11, September 9, 1996.
- 24 *The New York Times*, New York, May 24, 1996. See Rizwan Hussain, "Sham Elections in Occupied Kashmir," *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, May 30, 1996.
- 25 *The Kashmir Calling*, Lahore, Vol. V1, No. 1, May 16-31, 1996. *The Nation*, September 8, 1996.
- 26 *Dawn*, January 23 & February 28, 1997.
- 27 *The Nation*, August 4, 1996.

-
- 28 Wisner's speech at Command and Staff College, Quetta, on July 10, 1996. See *The Nation*, July 17, 1996.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 *The Nation*, August 4, 1996.
- 31 *Pakistan Horizon*, Karachi: The Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, Vol. 49, No. 4, (1996), 230.
- 32 *Washington Post*, June 3, 1997.
- 33 Gujral Doctrine had focused on establishing a South Asian Economic Community with a free trade zone and free movement of people. For detail see Ahmad Ejaz, "Gujral Doctrine and its Implications for Pakistan," *South Asian Affairs*, Lahore: Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Vol. V, No. 5, (June 2000).
- 34 Michael Krepon, "US perception of Pakistan's Security," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 50, No. 2, (April 1997), 13-14. See also *The Hindu*, Delhi, May 15, 1997.
- 35 Ahmad Ejaz, "Towards Normalization: India-Pakistan Peace Process 1997-1998," *South Asian Affairs*, Lahore: Centre for South Asian Studies, University of the Punjab, Vol.3, No.3, (December 1998), 20-26.
- 36 *The Muslim*, April 16, 1994
- 37 *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 47, No.3, (July 1994), 2.
- 38 Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Nuclear Development in Pakistan future Directions," in P.R. Chari, et al., *Nuclear Non-Proliferation in India and Pakistan: South Asian Perspectives*, (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 1996), 133-134.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 'Warnings, Shells Fly Over Tense Border,' *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles, May 24, 1998.
- 41 'India is ready for a 4th war,' *The Asian Age*, New Delhi, May 22, 1998.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 'Keep hands off Kashmir, Vajpayee warns Pakistan,' *The Times of India*, New Delhi, May 30, 1998.
- 44 'Kashmir cause of tension. Albright,' *The Nation*, July 10, 1998.
- 45 'Kashmir problem can't be ignored: U.S.' *The Pioneer*, New Delhi, June 20, 1998.
- 46 'After the Test: US Policy towards India and Pakistan,' Report of an independent task force, prepared by the Brookings Institute and the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, (1998), 9-10.
- 47 Brian Cloughley, "Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures in Kashmir," in *Nuclear Risk-Reduction Measures in South Asia*, The Henry L. Stimson Centre, Report No. 26, (November 1998), 50. Also available at: <http://www.stimson.org/images/uploads/research-pdfs/clougfml.pdf>
- 48 Manvendra Singh, "South Asia still a danger zone: UN report", *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, December 26, 1998.
- 49 *Dawn*, July 16, 1998.

- 50 'China links peace in South Asia with Kashmir solution,' *The Nation*, October 19, 1998.
- 51 'Japan offers venue for India-Pakistan talks,' *The News*, Lahore, August 16, 1998.
- 52 'Britain willing to mediate in Kashmir: Cook,' *The Asian Age*, June 15 and 27, 1998.
- 53 Text of UNSC resolution on India, Pakistan N-tests, *The News*, Lahore, June 8, 1998.
- 54 Text of the Joint Communiqué of the meeting of P-5 Foreign Ministers held June 4, 1998. Available at: <http://www.acronym.org.uk/spinsert.htm>
- 55 Strobe Talbot, *Enagaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb*, (Washington: The Brookings institution, 2004), 96- 97.
- 56 *Jang*, Lahore, February 23, 1999.
- 57 See Lahore Declaration, available at: <http://www.stimson.org/research-pages/lahore-summit/http://cns.miis.edu/inventory/pdfs/lahore.pdf>
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 *The Nation*, February 22, 1999
- 60 "South Asian Nuclear Diplomacy," *Disarmament Diplomacy*, London: The Acronym Institute for disarmament diplomacy, Issue No.35, (March 1999), available at: <http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd35/35asia.htm>
- 61 *The Kashmir Calling*, May 10 to May 31, 1999. *The Hindu*, May 31, 1999
- 62 *Dawn*, June 15, 1999
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 *Dawn*, June 15, 1998.
- 65 Shireen M. Mazari, *The Kargil Conflict 1999*, (Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies, 2003), 104.
- 66 Tehmina Mahmood, "Kargil Crisis and Deteriorating Security Situation in South Asia," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 52, No. 4, (October 1999), 37.
- 67 General Tony Zinni, *Battle Ready*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2004), 347
- 68 The U.S. congressmen made very fierce speeches, which mostly underlined Pakistan for supporting the infiltrators having links with Osama bin Laden and *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen*, a group of Islamic fighters fighting in Kashmir. Gary Ackerman, Co-Chairman of Congressional Caucus on India, said on June 10, 1999 that the "Terrorists have been aided...with Islamabad's moral and material assistance." He argued that "unless Pakistan ceased its help to "Islamic terrorists" and withdrew its troop from the area, "the State Department must designate Pakistan as a sponsor of international terrorism." Rajesh Kumar, "US and South Asia in the New Millennium", *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 53, No. 1, (January 2000). See also *Dawn*, July 3, 1999.
- 69 *Dawn*, June 14, 1999.
- 70 The Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman remarked: "We reject this linkage completely." Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh insisted that India would never tolerate any mediation. The United States had no role to play in brokering talks on Kashmir. *Dawn*, July 8, 1999. *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, July 19, 1999.

-
- 71 President Clinton's address to Pakistani people, on March 25, 2000, CNN.com.transcripts, <http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0003/25/bn.01.html> . See *Dawn*, March 26, 2000.
- 72 Bruce Riedel, "American Diplomacy and the 1999 Kargil Summit at Blair House," *Policy Papers Series*, Philadelphia: Centre for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania, (2002), 16, available at: http://media.sas.upenn.edu/casi/docs/research/papers/Riedel_2002.pdf
- 73 Pattern of Global Terrorism 2000, Annual Report on Terrorism, the U.S. Department of State, April 2001, available at: <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2000/>
- 74 Anthony Davis, "The India Tilt," *Asiaweek.com*, Vol.26, No.13, April 7, 2000. Available at: <http://www-cgi.cnn.com/ASIANOW/asiaweek/magazine/2000/0407/nat.southasia.clinton.html>. See also 'Respect LoC, says US,' *The Hindu*, March 22, 2000. Available at: <http://www.hindu.com/thehindu/2000/03/22/stories/01220001.htm>
- 75 'The World's most dangerous place is already at war,' *The Independent*, London, March 18, 2000.
- 76 'President Clinton's South Asia visit,' *Disarmament Diplomacy*, London: Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, Issue No. 44, (March 2000), available at: <http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd44/44sasia.htm>
- 77 President Clinton's interviews with *ABC News*, on March 21, 2000. See also *The Hindu*, March 24, 2000. *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, September 3, 16, 2000.
- 78 Ibid. see also HarisDarvesh, "Clinton shuts Cold War chapter in Pakistan," available at: <http://www.rediff.com/news/2000/apr/05clint.htm>
- 79 Kashmiri militants groups, however, rejected the ceasefire and continued to carry out their activities. Indian government also ended its unilateral ceasefire in Kashmir in May 2001. *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, London, June 2000. See also *Dawn*, June 6, 2000. Sridhar Krishna Swami, "Cautious Moves," *Frontline*, Chennai, September 1, 2000.
- 80 *Dawn*, October 18, 2001 and December 14, 2002.
- 81 *Dawn*, October 16, 2001, and December 17, 2002.
- 82 Foreign Terrorist Organizations, the U.S. Department of State, available at: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>
- 83 Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000, Annual Report on Terrorism, the U.S. Department of State, April 2001.
- 84 Background and Issues for Congress, National Commission Report on terrorism, the National Security Archives: terrorism and U.S. Policy, Vol1, February 6, 2001, available at <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB55/crs20010206.pdf>
- 85 "Terrorism: Near Eastern Groups and State Sponsors,2002," available at: <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL31119.pdf>
- ⁸⁶ Jessica Stern, "Pakistan's Jihad Culture," *Foreign Affairs*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, Vol. 79, NO. 6, (November-December 2000), 18. Available at:

-
- <https://jessicastern.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/pakistans-jihad-culture-foreign-affairs-novemberdecember2000.pdf>
- ⁸⁷ Stephen Philip Cohen, "South Asia," in Richard Ellings and Aaron Friedberg, ed., *Strategic Asia 2002-03: Asian Aftershocks*, (Seattle: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2002), 4-5. Available at: <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/articles/2002/12/southasia-cohen/20021201.pdf>. See also Stephen Philip Cohen, "The Nation and the State of Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly*, Washington D. C: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, (Summer 2002), 19-122, available at: https://muse.jhu.edu/login?auth=0&type=summary&url=/journals/washington_quarterly/v025/25.3cohen.html. Selig S. Harrison, "To Get at the Taliban, Apply Pressure on Pakistan," *International Herald Tribune*, New York, (March 8, 2001)
88. Patterns of Global Terrorism 2000, available at: <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2000/>
89. *The Hindu*, Delhi, September 17, 2001
90. Ibid., November 25, 2001.
91. *The Asian Age*, Delhi, October 4, 2001.
92. PrakashChander, *India and Pakistan-Unending Conflict*, Vol.111, (New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation, 2003), 78.
93. Ibid.
94. *Dawn*, April 19, 2003.
95. Praveen Swami, "Gen. Padmanabhan mulls over lessons of Operation Parakram," *The Hindu*, February 6, 2004, available at: <http://www.thehindu.com/2004/02/06/stories/2004020604461200.htm>
96. *India Today*, Noida, October 29, 2001, 30.
97. *Times of India*, New Delhi, May, 23, 2002.
98. *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, June 5, 2002.
99. Abbas Rashid, "Raising the Specter of Last Resort," *Daily Times*, April 15, 2002.
100. 'Pakistan, India move missiles to border,' *CNN*, December 26, 2001.
101. Kamal Matinuddin, "India-Pakistan stand-off," *Regional studies*, Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies, Vol. XXI, No.3, (Summer 2003), 37.
102. Manoj Joshi, "The Indo-Pakistan Military Balance and Limited War," *Strategic Digest*, New Delhi: Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, Vol. 33, No.1, (January2003), 22-23.
103. Ibid., 25
104. 'India and Pakistan Camped on Brink of War over Kashmir,' *News Review*, Disarmament Diplomacy, London: The Acronym Institute for disarmament diplomacy, Issue No. 65, (July-August 2002), available at: <http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd65/65nr01.htm>
105. *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 56, No. 1, January 2003, 143.
106. Ibid., Vol. 56, No. 2, April, 2003.

-
107. The visit of U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca in May 2003, to Pakistan and India was important in this regard. *IndiaAbroad*, New York, May 9, 2003, and May 23, 2003.
108. *India Abroad*, July 4, 2003.
109. 'Pakistan- India Joint Statement,' *Dawn*, January 7, 2004, available at: <http://www.dawn.com/news/403801/pakistan-india-joint-statement>
110. 'US name Hafiz Saeed terrorist,' *dna*, June 127, 2014, available at: <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-us-names-hafiz-saeed-terrorist-state-department-bans-jud-1998063>. See 'UN bans *Jamaat-ul-Dawa*, declares it a terror outfit,' December 11, 2008, available at: <http://defence.pk/threads/un-bans-jamaat-ud-dawa-declares-it-a-terror-outfit.17421/>
111. Barack Obama's interview with NBC News, October 30, 2008. Available at: <http://www.nbcnews.com/id/27464980#.VC5QSf4cRjp>
112. Howard B. Schaffer, "U.S. Kashmir Policy in the Obama Administration and Beyond," *South Asian Journal*, Issue, 3, January 2012., available at: <http://southasiajournal.net/u-s-kashmir-policy-in-the-obama-administration-and-beyond/>
113. Ibid.
114. Remarks by President Obama and Prime Minister Singh in Joint Press Conference in New Delhi, November 8, 2010., available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/11/08/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-singh-joint-press-conference->
115. Joint Statement by President Obama and Prime Minister Singh of India, November 8, 2010; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/11/08/joint-statement-president-obama-and-prime-minister-singh-india>
116. 'Not an Iota of change on Kashmir policy, US,' *OUTLOOK*, October 20, 2013. available at: <http://www.outlookindia.com/news/article/Not-an-Iota-of-Change-on-Kashmir-Policy-US/814251> . See 'US policy on Kashmir unchanged,' *Dawn*, October 2, 2013; <http://www.dawn.com/news/1050932> .