

Confidence Building Measures in Nuclear South Asia: Limitations and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

In a conflict ridden region, the significance of confidence building measures can not be over emphasized. These can be very useful in lessening tensions, avoiding conflicts and can even lead to cooperation and peace between antagonist states. South Asia with Pakistan and India, the two traditional foes are in need of serious efforts to contain and control tensions. The urgency for CBMs has grown especially after the nuclearisation of South Asia. The volatile situation in the region calls for non military and military CBMs. Even though no dramatic results are to be expected but atleast CBMs between Pakistan and India may help in building a requisite level of trust among them for a more peaceful region and avoidance of explosive situations like that of Kargil when both were at the brink of a nuclear war. The history of CBMs in South Asia is not very impressive as there are a number of limitations over CBMs, these constraints have to be looked into and dealt with as to have a more conducive atmosphere for negotiating and implementing CBMs. To bring about the true spirit of CBMs, the policy makers have to deal with the limitations first. Some of these constraints do not have a local origin and more seriously are prompted and propelled by international events and actors. This paper examines the history of CBMs in South Asia, the various limitations and their effects on the chances and probabilities of success of CBMs and the required bilateral and international cooperation so as to bring peace in nuclear South Asia.

KEY WORDS: South Asia, CBMs, Pakistan, India

Introduction

A highly volatile South Asia in present times is in the lime light of world politics as the two traditional rivals Pakistan and India live here. Ever since their inception both have been facing tense situations, conflicts and even wars, leading to pleas for peace. The urgency for peace efforts have grown more ever since the nuclearisation of South Asia, where Pakistan and India become nuclear – After that, there is strong appeal for peace in South Asia. This region is in dire need of serious efforts from both sides to undertake CBMs in true spirit as the history of

CBMs in South Asia is not very impressive when looking at the implementation and success rate of CBMs between the two.

The conflict between India and Pakistan shows an “enduring rivalry”, that seems to be true with regard to origin, violence, failures in conflict management and persistence (Paul, 2005: 80). The relationship between India and Pakistan begs for reassessment (Harrison, Paul & Kux, 1999: 18). On the borders of Pakistan and India undeclared war rages that threatens to convert into a declared war along with the ever prevailing danger of a nuclear holocaust (Kothari & Zia, 2005: 55). After nuclear explosions by both Pakistan and India they are now compelled to reconsider their policies regarding each other. CBMs are steps agreed upon and taken between two or more parties to build an atmosphere of trust and confidence, these actions lead to reduce tensions and lessen miscalculations amongst the parties. CBMs are important segment of preventive diplomacy as they lessen the level of fear and mistrust between the parties making their behavior more predictable. CBMs, as the term clearly reflects are the measures adopted by opposing parties, to lessen the hostility and to limit the escalation. Though at the earlier stage, there are small steps towards preventing miscalculations and miscommunications, but with the passage of time CBMs can contribute a lot in the process of peace building.

The nuclear rivals are stumbling forward, but with considerable optimism. Small steps and initiatives for confidence building may help resolve bigger issues, primarily the Kashmir conflict through diplomatic means. Some of the Confidence Building Measures that have been a success, include people to people contacts and a bus service from Muzafarabad to Srinagar, ‘cricket diplomacy’, increased cultural and educational exchange etc. By showing flexibility and readiness to let the peace process move forward, both countries have proven themselves not to be conflict prone or myopic by any means.

The significance of CBMs between India and Pakistan can be fully understood in the context of the international political and economic environment, as this offers immense incentives for politically stable and peaceful nations, hence encouraging rival countries to undertake CBMs.

Relationship between Pakistan and India are marred by problems that are attributed to historical, civilizational, territorial, governance and diplomatic differences which are responsible for converting South Asia into the most ‘complex, volatile and politically explosive region, the most enigmatic and baffling in the world’. If the two countries would have been able to achieve enduring or non-interference model of bilateralism, this region would have progressed greatly, each side reaping its benefits (Kundi, 2009: 124). Conflicting parties, therefore, are compelled to seek a settlement of their inter-regional and intra regional disputes. They are faced with a crucial decision whether to stay abreast of these developments in the rest of the world, or to linger on with poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, despair and uncertainty.

Both India and Pakistan seem to be virtual prisoners of their past and when it comes to their relationship their attitudes towards each other are so deeply engrained that neither side has acted in the best of interest of the people of the region as a whole (Wright, 1989: 124). India and Pakistan are today confronted with this choice and endeavor to resolve all outstanding crises and conflicts which have stalled the process of socio-economic and political development of this region. Gradually, the traditional South Asian rivals are moving towards the realization to bring about immediate and qualitative changes both in internal dynamics and external orientation which should respond to and synchronize with the rapidly changing economic, social, and political dynamics all over the world.

The efficacy of CBMs should not remain confined to the management of crises and conflicts. Instead, these should be directed towards the resolution of conflicts as well (Ahmar, 2003: 47). If this is not done, the utility of CBMs would be short-lived and even minor provocations from either side would stall the process. We have already witnessed that intensification of conflicts leads to the halting or even reversal of CBMs in one stroke. This happened during the 2002 India-Pakistan military standoff and after the Mumbai attacks of Nov. 26, 2008. However, this does not imply that CBMs are ineffective. The fact is that if core issues remain unresolved, the utility of CBMs is severely limited.

What are CBMs?

CBMs help in bringing about an atmosphere that facilitates conflict resolution. CBMs can be described as measures or steps that help build confidence, seize the undesired drift towards open hostility and reduce tensions (Cheema, 2001: 18). CBMs can be an effective mechanism for prevention of war, arms control and disarmament, agreements and facilitating conflict resolution (Desjardins, 1996). CBMs are supposed to be the modest steps that are required in facilitating and guiding in the correct environment to lessen tensions and allow communication of political and military leadership on both sides (Jaspal, 2004: 62). The importance of CBMs has increased in the nuclear age and they are particularly needed between nuclear rivals such as India-Pakistan.

By reducing suspicions, CBMs can essentially increase understanding (Chari, 2003). As the term suggests, the objective of CBMs is to develop confidence and trust. Any action, development, agreement or treaty that generates and enhances confidence between adversaries can be regarded as CBMs ranging from courteous handshakes to any steps towards increasing cooperation and regional integration.

In confidence building, CBMs can work at various levels:

- i) People to people contacts
- ii) NGOs
- iii) Increased trade and military cooperation
- iv) Cultural exchange.

The highest level on which these operate, is the level of the state representatives and diplomatic representatives. These levels, though separate, are in fact inter-linked and must be coordinated, as they are equally important contributors towards confidence building. The civil society has a relative advantage as it is more independent, flexible, diverse and with free interaction and communication even with traditional adversaries. Governments must, however, conduct supervision and monitoring in a mature and responsible manner to ensure that everything is done within the legal parameters. However, this should not create an obstacle in the way of conducting CBMs. It is the civil society which prepares the ground for governments to act in a conducive environment, and helps to dispel the pressure and tension.

CBMs work to promote the communication in order to counter the feared threats. CBMs are recognized as “arrangements designed to enhance ... assurance of mind and belief in the trust – worthiness of states confidence is the product of much broader patterns of relations than those which relates to military strategy. In fact the latter have to be woven into a complex texture of economic cultural, technical and social relationship” (Hoist, 1983: 284).

The application of CBMs vary from region to region, although the borrowed experience is relevant but may be of limited value. Two cases express this phenomenon.

i) The super powers détente ease the situation. Israel and Egypt/Syria formed the demilitarized zones in 1974, under Disengagement Agreements. However these examples can not be fitted into South Asia, because of the ongoing conflicts in the region, especially in the context of Kashmir issue (Ibid.).

ii) After the India-Pakistan war 1965, both established a hotline between their Military Operations Directorates like that of the hotline between Washington and Moscow after the Cuban Missile crisis. In April 1991 India-Pakistan signed “Agreement on Advance Notice of Military Exercises, Maneuvers and Troop Movements”, as that of the pact between NATO and Warsaw within the Helsinki Accord to provide prior information of military exercises (Ibid.).

There are certain tools which help to measure the behavior of states. Some important tools are:

- Communication Measures
- Constraint Measures
- Transparency Measures
- Verification Measures

(<http://www.stimson.org/southasia/?SN=SA2001112047.10/13/2009>).

Communication measures help to defuse crisis, as they can be useful in normal situation and avoid any tense situation and also promote confidence. Regional communication centers and hotlines help in easing a situation. Constraint measures are helpful in keeping forces at a distance from one another, particularly along borders. Whenever there are large scale exercises on borders, these measures include the prior notification about military movement. Pre-notification, data

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exchange and observations regarding each others military capability, arms buildup and tests are associated with transparency measures. As to verify the state's conformity regarding a pact or agreement, verification measures are taken.

Looking at the case of South Asia, “Nuclear South Asia is a reality today, as soon as India and Pakistan conducted their nuclear weapon tests in May 1998, the debate – predominantly outside the Indian subcontinent – over nuclear security and stability assumed significant momentum” (Mishra, 2005: 101).

Confidence building measures can be of various types; they can be, military, diplomatic, cultural or political. Amongst these, military and diplomatic are the most frequently used in building confidence between parties in conflict. CBMs intend to change the parties' incorrect perceptions of the motives and to keep away the misunderstandings regarding military policies that may lead to war. For political and diplomatic relations, CBMs can convert the ideas of the parties' ideas about their need for security and even promote shared security requirements (www.caii-dc.com/ghai/toolbox5.htm).

CBMs Illustrated Triptych

Information Exchange	Observation/Inspection	Operational Constraints
Disclosure of military budgets, major unit and command location and organization, force levels, doctrine	Observers at major maneuvers On site inspection	Ban on simulated attacks. Designated troop entry/exit points
Notification of accidental, unauthorized or unexplained nuclear incidents	Sensors at ICBM Silos Noninterference with national technical means of verifications	Ban on forward-basing of 'offensive' weapons and support equipment Ban on multiple missile launches
Notification of maneuvers and missile test launches	Non concealment undertakings	Maneuver/movement ceilings
Dedicated communication links (Hot line)	Enhanced conditions for military liaison mission officers and other accredited military personnel	SSBN sanctuaries/ASW free zones
Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers		

Source: John Borawski, *Avoiding war in the nuclear age: Confidence Building Measures for crisis stability* (Westview Press, London, 1986) p.11.

Military commanders for pre notification of forth coming military exercises can use direct telephone links between them as confidence building measures. These hot lines can be a major source of preventing conflict or a crisis. This kind of communication leads to transparency and faith between adversaries. Such kind of pacts enable the governments to go for cultural and other kinds of confidence building measures which would include visits of delegations and intellectuals etc (Ibid).

Why CBMs between Pakistan and India?

Since inception both Pakistan and India have been suspicious of each other. Both have seen tensions, conflicts and even wars between them. The best option for the

conflict resolution for both is to go for CBMs and also to deal with the various constraints and challenges in the way of CBMs.

It is taken as that US Deputy National Security Advisor Robert Gates on his trip to this region in June 1990 had proposed to India and Pakistan to undertake CBMs which would lessen hostility and chances of accidental war (Gunguly, 1996: 12). Even before the visit of Robert Gates, CBMs were on the agenda of India and Pakistan. A hotline had been established between the Foreign Secretaries of both countries. This hotline helped in the situation when India held its largest peace time military exercise, known as Brasstack crisis of 1987 (Ibid, 13).

It is in the interest of both India and Pakistan to adopt political initiative and also adopt certain technological mechanism so as to lessen the chances of crises instability. Along with the provision of information, i.e., needed to address the concern, cooperative efforts, can also become CBMs (Dittmer, 2005: 41). As to institutionalize the process of CBMs, it is required to infiltrate fundamental necessary awareness among people regarding the effectiveness, role and relevance of the concept of CBMs. People mostly in South Asia seem to be ignorant and even the policy makers seem suspicious regarding CBMs as this concept has not been professionally examined (Ahmer, 2001: 23).

Without any organized process of political reconciliation in this tense region, the role of CBMs naturally becomes critically important for maintaining peace and controlling arms race through preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction (Krepon, 1999: 29). Presently, the CBMs between Pakistan and India are being carried out on three levels, i.e., Track I (official level), Track II (non-official level) and Track III (multi-national level).

The term 'cricket diplomacy' became popular during 1980s, when General Zia paid a surprise visit to India, ostensibly to watch an India Pakistan cricket match. However, this was actually a clever diplomatic move to defuse the intensifying crisis. Musharraf also indulged in such 'cricket diplomacy' when he visited India to watch the India-Pakistan cricket match. This trend has been termed as a very significant development in South Asia. With this atmosphere of amity through the process of CBMs, both countries have expressed willingness and determination to move ahead.

Whenever the relations between India and Pakistan have become better the expectations arouse that their rivalry might dissolve into a more comfortable relationship (Kamath, 2005: 57). Both India and Pakistan will have to embark upon a promising process to resolve long-standing political disputes and develop a lasting peace through cooperation in multifarious aspects. The two countries are not isolated actors, independent of each other at the regional and global level. The peace, security, and progress in South Asia depend upon the evolution and nature of relations between Pakistan and India. It would not be an over-statement to say that security, peace and progress in the world at large is inextricably linked to the regional peace. Even the US needs a stable and peaceful South Asia for its security and long-term interests. Therefore, the dynamics in South Asia can no longer be

ignored, and the US can no longer afford the indifference of nature it, that displayed after the Afghan war. It was this indifference that turned the region into a safe heaven for Al Qaeda, in turn having disastrous consequences for the security of the US. South Asia, therefore, is a region of vital importance both for the United States, and for global peace.

Another factor is that dwindling and unreliable gas and oil resources of OPEC countries in the Middle East which have led to a sense of urgency in the US and the West to seek alternative energy resources. This alternative can be best provided by the Central Asian states. In order to fulfill its growing energy needs, US needs to develop a considerable political leverage in the region. An important competitor for US interests in the region is China, which the US considers more of a menace to its interests in Asia. The US therefore needs to curb the growing influence of China in the region, and one way to do that is to demonstrate its commitment and ability to ensure friendly relations between India and Pakistan.

For risk reduction, there should also be a tacit agreement, as to avoid provocative statements from those people who hold important government offices specially during a crisis (Rajain, 2005: 306).

However, it must be clarified that in some matters, there do exist different perspectives of Pakistan and India towards non-military CBMs. While India considers the precedence of trade, business, cultural and scientific exchanges over military CBMs, Pakistan on the other hand gives priority to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, terming it the 'core issue' to be resolved in accordance with the UN resolutions of 1948 (Khan, 2003: 29).

Track Record of CBMs between India and Pakistan

The history of CBMs in South Asia with regard to India and Pakistan has not been very hopeful or impressive. The process, overall, has been rather slow due to an unfavorable political environment on both sides. However, it must be mentioned that initiatives taken by the NGOs (non-governmental organizations) remained encouraging. This demonstrates an underlying desire of the people in both countries to move ahead, co operate and collaborate. Many attempts have been made in the past for military-to-military and political confidence building. However, interstate conflicts, often linked to internal unrest and disturbance continued.

Confidence building is not a new phenomenon in India Pakistan relations. In spite of the legacy of partition that creates bitter memories, unresolved disputes and a history of three full scale wars and many near-wars, both India and Pakistan have also managed to sign several bilateral agreements of both civil and military nature, aimed to generate confidence and reduce tensions (Cheema, 1999: 32). The following is a list of the significant agreements between the two countries:

Various Military and Diplomatic CBMs Between Pakistan And India

Date	Description
1968	An agreement on all outstanding points with regard to the western sector of Rann of Kutch
December, 1971	Hotline between Pakistani and Indian Director General of Military Operations (DG MOs) was established. In Lahore Summit 1999, agreed to review all existing communication links with a view to upgrade and approve the DGMO and other hotlines
January 1989	Agreement signed by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, including agreement of not attacking each others nuclear facilities, avoidance of double taxation & cultural cooperation
1991	Air Space Violation agreement signed and ratified in August 1992, stipulates that no combat aircraft shall fly within 10 km. of each others airspace.
April 1991	Agreement for prior notification of military exercises near their borders, without informing their military counterparts
1992	Joint Declaration on Prohibition of Chemical Weapons by both countries, agreed not to develop, produce, acquire, or use chemical weapons
October 3, 2005	Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of a communication link between Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and Indian Coast Guards. The accord and memorandum were signed after the talks between Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri and his counterpart Natwar Singh in Islamabad
January 1, 2006	India and Pakistan exchanged lists of their respective nuclear installations and facilities
February 21, 2007	India and Pakistan signed agreement on "Reducing the Risk from Accidents Relating to Nuclear Weapons"
August 14, 2007	India released 72 Pakistani nationals, including 48 fishermen and 24 prisoners from Indian jails, and Pakistan released 135 Indian nationals, including 100 fishermen and 35 prisoners, from its jails
October 19, 2007	Pakistan and India held the Fifth Round of Talks to review the nuclear and missile related CBMs as part of the Composite Dialogue Process. The second round of the Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism (JATM) was held in the following week
October 22, 2008	A second trade route across the Line of Control is opened. The route connects the cities of Rawalkot and Poonch
December 27, 2008	In the aftermath of the Mumbai attacks that resulted in over 180 fatalities, the Indian and Pakistani Directors General of Military Operations made unscheduled use of their hotline to discuss the troop movements along their border. One likely topic of discussion was Indian troop rotations to exercise the areas, near Pakistani border and small-scale counter-deployments by Pakistani troops.
January 1, 2009	For the 18th consecutive year, India and Pakistan exchanged lists of their respective nuclear facilities (see entry for December 31, 1988). The two countries also exchanged the lists of Pakistanis, held in Indian prisons and Indians held in Pakistani prisons (see entry for May 31, 2008).

Sources: 1. Stimson – Timeline of South Asia CBMs

<http://www.stimson.org/southasia/?SN=SA20060207948>

2. Umbreen Javaid., 'Compulsive Confidence Building in South Asia' *IPRI Journal*, Winter 2006. Vol. VI, No.1. pp: 154-166

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Various Political, Cultural, Commercial and Communications CBMs between Pakistan and India

Date	Description
1948	An agreement was made in Karachi on exchange of prisoners, evaluation of urban property and preparation of revenue records and evacuation of moveable property
1950	Liaquat – Nehru signed an agreement in New Delhi on the measures to be adopted to deal with major problems i.e., minorities rights, cultural and trade relations.
1960	Indus Water Treaty Mediated by the World Bank to resolve problems regarding distribution of water resources.
1966	Tashkent Declaration stipulates that “relations between India and Pakistan shall be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the other.
1972	Simla Accord followed by 1971 Indo-Pak war. Both countries to renounce the use of force as a means of setting outstanding disputes. Both sides agreed to resolve their disputes in bilateral forum.
1982	A joint Commission set up to review bi-lateral ties.
Feb.1999	Lahore Declaration: reiterating the determination of both countries to implementing the Shimla Agreement in letter and spirit. Resolution of all disputes including Kashmir.
Jan. 2004	Joint Press Statement was given in Islamabad to carry the process of normalization forward, the President of Pakistan and Prime Minister of India agreed to commence the composite dialogue in Feb. 2004. Peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.
Sept. 2004	Joint Statement was given in New York by President Musharraf and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh reiterated their commitment to continue the bilateral dialogue to restore cooperation between India and Pakistan.
Feb. 2005	Start Sri Nagar – Muzaffarabad bus service from Apr. 7, 2005 and resume rail service between Monabao – Khokhrapar (Sindh) from Oct. 2005. and launch bus service between Amritsar and Lahore.
April 2005	New Delhi Statement: 17-points stated out of which one refers to Jammu & Kashmir issue.
Sept 28, 2005	To start Lahore – Amritsar bus service in Oct 2005
Sept. 16, 2005	Agreed to continue CBM process and PM Manmohan to visit Islamabad.
October-November, 2005	Pakistan accepts 25 tons of food, medicine, tents, blankets, plastic sheets from India after the earthquake.
January 20, 2006	Bus service from Lahore to Amritsar begins.
February 1, 2006	Pakistan and India agree to open rail links between Munnabao in Rajasthan and Khokhrapar in Sind on February 18 th .
February 18, 2006	India and Pakistan resume train service after 40 years.
February 27,	Fibre optic link between Amritsar and Lahore becomes operational.

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March 7, 2006	Indo-Pak night bus service from Ferozepur and Fazilka to Ludhiana-Chandigarh resumes.
March 8, 2006	India and Pakistan agree in principle to expand airline service between the two nations.
March 22, 2006	India and Pakistan agree to jointly fight human trafficking, counterfeit currency trade, and illegal immigration.
March 24, 2006	Amritsar-Nankana Sahib bus service is flagged off.
May 3, 2006	India and Pakistan reach an agreement to revive trade in Kashmir.
June 1, 2006	India and Pakistan agree to host festivals displaying each other's movies.
September 16, 2006	President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh agree to "put in place an India-Pakistan anti-terrorism institutional mechanism to identify and implement counter-terrorism initiatives and investigations."
May 21, 2008	The Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan agree to a series of Kashmir-specific CBMs, including a triple-entry permit to facilitate crossing the Line of Control. The two ministers also agree to provide consular access to prisoners in each others' countries.
September 25, 2008	Pakistani President Zardari and Indian Prime Minister Singh formally announced the opening of several trade routes between the two countries. The Wagah-Atari road link and the Khokrapar-Munnabao rail link will both be opened to trade, as will the cross-LoC Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot roads.
July 16, 2009	The Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, meeting on the sidelines of a summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Egypt, issue a joint statement "charting the way forward in India - Pakistan relations."

Source: 1. Stimson – Timeline of South Asia CBMs

<http://www.stimson.org/southasia/?SN=SA20060207948>

2. Umbreen Javaid., 'Compulsive Confidence Building in South Asia' *IPRI Journal*, Winter 2006. Vol. VI, No.1. pp: 154-166

Nuclearisation of South Asia and Urgency for CBMs

Pakistan and India are equipped with nuclear weapons and, therefore, the threat of the intentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons has increased. Therefore, conflict prevention and promoting CBMs is the need of the time (www.defencejournal.com/2000/aug/cbms.htm). It is clear, therefore, that war, confrontation, coercion and perpetual hostility between neighboring countries possessing nuclear capability are not plausible options. Such a tendency, in fact, would be suicidal for both, as the levels of 'Mutually Assured Destruction' have been reached.

States which have newly acquired nuclear weapons are likely to be more vulnerable to the destruction and more liable to accident and miscalculation for lack of experience. For example, during the early period of the Cold War, the risk and likelihood of a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union was fairly high and one example can be that of the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.

However, with the passage of time, both nuclearized super powers became more responsible regarding the use of this immense destructive capability. Through various treaties, the two worked towards confidence-building measures. With greater advancement in technology, a more efficient command and control system came into being and these developments helped them to overcome the fear of a nuclear accident.

Strategic stability in South Asia is barely maintained, and the region is ever prone to further destabilization. Since 1998, when both India and Pakistan became nuclear region twice faced the danger of nuclear war. Since 1980s, nuclear weapons have played a vital role in all India – Pakistan confrontations i.e., Brasstack 1986-87, Compound crisis 1990, Kargil 1999 and Military Standoff 2002 (Zeb, 2009: 16).

South Asia remains one of the most explosive regions of the world, which contains two nuclear powers. Both have not signed NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) and most of their nuclear facilities have not been opened to IAEA safeguards. They already have fought a number of wars and still have strong disputes that can flare up into a nuclear war that will destroy not only the whole area but will engulf other areas also (Tabassum, 2003: 42).

The relations between India and Pakistan assumed great significance at the end of the 20th century when the most crucial event that was Kargil issue, drew the attention of the whole world towards South Asia (Khan, 2008: 149). This remains the only case when two nuclear powers have fought with each other.

It is heartening to note that there is a growing realization in New Delhi and Islamabad of the tremendous responsibility that comes with being nuclear states. It is a fact which both countries know, that when a state possesses nuclear weapons, war does not remain an option. This is because in such a situation any escalation of conflict in future will not remain localized. It would instantaneously draw the attention of global powers and be internationalized. This realization should speed up the pace of the CBMs.

Indo-Pak relations are crises-prone and if uncontrolled the two powers can fall into a conflict which may acquire a nuclear dimension, therefore nuclear deterrence in South Asia is fragile (Chari, op. cit). Many optimists argue that for a decade despite major political hostility and border clashes along with cross border terrorism, Nuclear deterrence worked in South Asia and when Kargil war was fought both remained restrained. On the other hand, the pessimists giving counter arguments claims that Kargil war did not go out of control because of the intervention of the USA (Koithara, 2003: 3).

It is the need of the time that both India and Pakistan should make clear their mutual strategies and doctrines. Regarding their intention the greater the clarity and communication with each other, the lesser will be uncertainties and even anxieties. This will help in over reacting or carrying out wrong decisions when there is no second chance both being nuclear (Jyotirmoy, 2004: 216).

Limitations and Challenges

There are a number of limitations however. Major constraints are as follows:

- **Water Sector**

Indian intentions for a faithful compliance of the Indus Basin Water Treaty are not clear. Excessive construction of power generation facilities on river Chenab and attempted diversion of river Jhelum is unnerving for the country of Pakistan which is entirely dependent on agricultural sector. Pakistani farmer who sees river Chenab reduced to the size of a drain in winters after the completion of only 5 structures shudders at the future prospects when another about 50 structures planned on the two rivers will take shape. The apprehension and fears start raising their head when it is realized that with blockade of water in upper reaches of river Chenab and river Jhelum. India has very little to gain economically as compared to a nearly total loss of agricultural produce in Pakistan, yet it is not prepared to budge an inch or even marginally accommodate Pakistan. India needs to realize that no CBMs which ignore Pakistani concern on waters of these two rivers could ever be effective. Other than the economic catastrophe, the most disturbing aspect is that it creates distrust about the prospects of actual and in letter and spirit, the implementation of any future pact between the two countries. Water sector, therefore, should be the starting point for real CBMs, as Pakistan is very sensitive and India in comparison does not have to lose much.

- **Hostile Mindset**

The major limitations emanate from the overpowering populist pressure or hawkish mind set in both countries. The voices of reason and moderation which seldom get ascendancy over populist crush, the other slogans are conveniently subdued on the slightest pretext. The recent media blitz in India which nearly led to a declaration of war against Pakistan is a case in point. Both countries have a tendency to swiftly fall back to the old ways of adversaries. It is quite difficult and demanding on both sides to bring about a gradual change in the mind set. Changing the traditional outlook embedded in an embittered past is a tall order and would call for a massive overhaul of pulpit and educational institutions, film and media centers. Unless that is done the politicians will remain under public pressure to compete in rhetoric against the other country.

- **Trade**

The theory of international trade and its practice all over the world advocates and indicates that in bilateral trade the smaller country is likely to

gain more by getting access to bigger market. The trade between India and Pakistan however remains heavily tilted in favor of India. Pakistan is denied of the access to bigger domestic markets of India as well as use of road entry points, thereby adding to the transport cost and making the goods in competitive. India needs to be more liberal and less protective. It is quite obvious that trade between the two countries is not guided by the principles of free market but by the respective foreign offices and there are very little chances of improvement in the near future without a conscious effort to that effect for a mutually beneficial trade driven by economic forces.

- **War against Terror**

Pakistan expects a better understanding of the on going terrorism crisis in Pakistan. The least Pakistan wants India is to rub salt into its wounds inflicted by Talibans. Talk of funds and weapons supply by India via Afghanistan to the Pakistani Talibans, are certainly of no help in the context of CBMs. On the other extreme, there is India denying visas to Pakistani sportsmen, especially the cricketers, participating in the Indian premier league. The civil society has not been able to get around its government, thereby seriously jeopardizing the prospects of a continuing and improving people to people contact.

Emergence of strategic partnership between India and USA and its ever increasing manifestation in enhanced support for Indian view point and its meticulous implementation is raising additional and more serious apprehensions in Pakistani mind about its security and about the real intention of the new strategic partners. Increased presence of India in Afghanistan and convergence of the US and Indian out look for that country is making Pakistan mortally afraid of the arrangements and take certain steps in self defence which of course will not bolster the CBMs.

- **International Chess Play**

If world has been much better, if India and Pakistan had made joint efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, to open trade and development opportunities for both countries in the entire Central Asian region. Iran–Pakistan and India gas pipeline would have been the most effective CBM as it would have created interdependency and mutual stakes. This extremely vital project was stalled by US for arm–twisting of Iran. India on the other hand made best use of the US anxiety and very deftly achieved its goal of recognition as a nuclear power and transfer of civil nuclear energy technology. If best of the CBMs are to be sacrificed like that, friendly co-existence in South Asia will remain a distant dream.

Similarly, if India wants US presence in Afghanistan till the de-nuclearization of Pakistan, it would be a hope against hope to expect meaningful progress in confidence building between the two countries. Such

an approach is a fact that carries the danger of throwing whole peace process out of window.

In fact, progress on CBMs and the overall peace process between the two belligerent neighbors is hostage to international events. Paradoxically, the best CBMs between them are the robust deterrence. The second paradox is that the world always gives those lessons to settle their disputes bilaterally but the International actors are always playing games in the region and making the going tough for both sides. In the face of it, there is no clean and easy way out for the neighbors at the moment.

The Future Prospects of CBMs

The new regional and global dynamics are gradually compelling both actors to budge from their traditionally held stands. The optimists in India and Pakistan see a ray of hope in this clime of positivity. However, skeptics, hawks and traditionalists disregard these attempts with cynicism. These, however, are relatively few in number, and the voices of optimism drown away the pessimistic strain.

With regard to the peace process, Lahore Declaration comprised of one major note that India and Pakistan, as to have mature relationship, should aim for a multi-track approach towards the various aspects of bilateral ties so that the relations do not become hostage to a single issue (Nanda, 2001: 127).

The momentum of CBMs is likely to further accelerate in future on a firm footing. This optimism conclusion drawn above is not wishful thinking but is based on both external and internal factors. These are summarized below (Javaid, 2006: 154-166):

The U.S has deeply penetrated both the Indian and Pakistani armies. Previously, the Americans were unable to develop contacts with the Indian Army. This prevented them from getting the level of influence in their decision making mechanism that they desired. Now, things are different as the US, through its supply of arms, transfer of technology, strategic partnership and joint military exercises has managed to attain a position of influence in the Indian Army which it can use to tame down the hawkish elements present therein.

It is a fact that India is an emerging regional economic power. It has the potential to develop into a world economic power in the coming decades. However, to achieve this, it needs sustained growth which can only be possible through increased foreign investment. The massive direct foreign investment that it received in the last decade has provided it a big 'push' for a take-off in the Indian economy. Border tensions with Pakistan will drive away the foreign investment which is critical at this juncture.

India desires to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council. This can only materialize, if India can peacefully resolve its disputes with its neighbors, particularly Pakistan which has stakes in Kashmir.

In Pakistan, there has developed a changed perception about resistance movements and terrorism, in tune with the global mood. This has forced the country to reconsider its regional strategies and global outlook. There is an understanding that Pakistan can no longer take the tough stance with regard to the insurgency in Kashmir. It needs to mellow down its policies and adapt itself to the global perception.

The Kashmiris are gradually disassociating themselves from both India and Pakistan due to the tremendous losses of life, honor and property and the absence of hope for liberation, for which they hold both governments responsible. The depressing statistics and bleak prospects for the success of their armed struggle is acting as a moderating influence.

It is a known fact that the unresolved Kashmir issue is the main cause for failure of attempts to have normal relations between India and Pakistan. The resolution of the Kashmir dispute can be one single huge confidence building step which would let every thing else follow (Rashid, 2001: 391).

UN peace keeping forces may be deployed in case of the continued tension in Kashmir - something both India and Pakistan can not afford at this critical point, in time. This has forced both the countries to look for 'softer' options.

Pakistan has realized that it is too costly to support its massive war machinery with its fragile economy. Therefore, there is a shift in priorities with greater focus on the economy. The objective is to bring it to a level which can sustain its huge army and help in achieving the strategic objectives.

As a matter of policy, Pakistan is now trying to promote normalization of ties with India. This is important in order to curb militancy in the society which has emerged as a huge threat.

China appears to have taken a more passive role at present. In order to emerge as the triumphant economic power, she must steer clear of any regional conflict calling for any intervention. China is aggressively developing its burgeoning economy.

The Information Technology boom has revolutionized the way of life. The public is now better informed, aware, resourceful, vocal, interactive and independent. Therefore, governments can no longer ignore the over whelming consensus of public opinion in favor of peaceful co-existence.

While optimism is well-placed, it should also be borne in mind that suspicions and mistrust will not evaporate overnight. The process of CBMs has to be a steady process with both ups and downs, considering the history that both share. However, to create trust and sincerity in letting the CBMs succeed is required.

The track record of earlier efforts shows that despite CBMs, tension, conflicts and even wars have not been ruled out. This time, however, things look

markedly different, mainly because of comprehensive people to people contact. This is helping to clear the way for the decision makers of both the countries to come closer for a resolution of their differences.

International community strongly resents the belligerence between the two nuclear powers and desires a peaceful South Asia. The public opinion in both the countries is overwhelmingly in favour of peace and prosperity. These factors create just the needed conducive environment for the peace process to move forward. The opinion all over the world is gradually moving strongly against militancy, and there is an understanding that this emanates from injustice, state high handedness, oppression and discrimination. There is also a steady building up of pressure for equitable honorable and sustainable resolution to the Kashmir and other disputes.

Conclusion

Over the last two years major disruptions have been witnessed in the contacts and dialogue between the two countries. The precariousness and fragility of the CBMs or a lasting relationship have surfaced awkwardly and ominously during this period. The overwhelming impression is that India ceases on the smallest and first opportunity to get out of the peace process. On the 1st sign of political disturbance in Pakistan namely the lawyers' movement in March 2007, it started dragging its feet and found a good excuse in the later intensive events during Musharraf period to bring the whole process to a standstill. Indian response to the weakening grip of Pervez Musharraf was rather callous, as it raised its degree of alienation in equal measures to the domestic political isolation of General Musharraf.

India professed and every one expected that with the arrival of a truly elected political set up in Pakistan, the comprehensive dialogue will get a fillip. That was the understanding given to the official circle and the common citizenry. The expectant people were however; in for a rude shock as the whole enthusiasm evaporated in thin air with the terrorist attack (November 26, 2008) on Mumbai.

Mumbai attacks were potent enough to derail the whole process rather it brought the two neighbors right to the brink of war which in all probability was touching the rims of a nuclear show down.

Indian hawks have apparently assumed the status of a super power in their minds though absolutely prematurely. Now they want Pakistan to behave in the same fashion to them as she responded to US after 9/11 attacks and the present drone attacks. They want Pakistan to concede to their self assumed right of pre-emptive strike on when and where required basis. This delusion of course is to be corrected and put in perspective by Pakistan. Till date there has been no evidence that the Al-Qaeda, Taliban fighting in Afghanistan or the Pakistani Taliban fighting the Pak Army have ever ingressed into India. Now India wants the world to deal with the Kashmiri freedom fighters, operating from within the Indian held

Kashmir and from the Azad Kashmir as terrorists and give India the right to eliminate them even at their base camps. While the world generally glossed over the happenings inside Kashmir, it noticed the attacks in mainland India. Indians have been able to successfully clamor about these attacks in Delhi and Mumbai and have almost made their case before the world against the outfits found in mainland Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan cannot accept this position and give India a license to saunter around. India does not want to lose an inch of the space gained in the public opinion around the world. Result is a stale mate and the peace process back to square one.

The latest accusation by Pakistan about Indian instigation and intervention in Balochistan makes things more complex. Add to this, the agonizing and Indian overtures on river waters flowing from Kashmir into Pakistan and even a moderate Pakistan loses faith in the promised peace process. Imposition of conditions every now and then for a restart of dialogue, multiplies the complexity of the situation and further dwindles the prospects of its early success.

Seen in the back drop of the brief over view given in the preceding lines, it would be extremely important to develop a clear understanding of the dampening factors and point a way out or a way forward.

The plank on which the CBMs stand, is fragile to take the full load of outer force but is combustible as well to get flared up by internal ignition that makes the relationship between the two nuclear neighbors volatile, unpredictable and highly explosive leaving it to any chance happening to fatally destabilize the whole region at any given time.

There are nevertheless silver-linings over the horizon inspite of thick dark clouds of distrust, estrangement and uncertainty. In the recent general election in India, Pakistan factor was the least significant issue. Indian youth and the new voters appear indifferent to Pakistan, as they have fixed their eyes on global goal rather than narrow South Asian supremacy. In Pakistan, a large number of people have started recognizing the true position and potential of India in the comity of nations that carries the hope of changing an overall mind set of the two societies - so vital for the success of the peace process and some extent actual CBMs on ground.

The growing energy requirements and search for the new energy sources in Central Asia shall in the long run promote greater cooperation between India and Pakistan, the later being a conduit for all such ventures.

India and Pakistan can not access the Central Asian markets with out a stable Afghanistan and none of the two countries can single handedly stabilize Afghanistan. Both of them have to cooperate out of compulsion. The economic dictate are very heavy and strong and neither of them can deny or delay it.

Track-II diplomacy has thrown up many new options to solve the Kashmir dispute to the satisfaction of both India and Pakistan and to the betterment of the main stake holders, the Kashmiri people. A compromise and composite solution now looks possible.

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The saner elements in India realize fully well that in case the Taliban overpower the Pakistan Army, there will no stopping them at the Wahga border. Both the states therefore have a joint and a very deep stake in controlling this menace and there is every likelihood that some joint and visible steps are taken by the two countries in near future. Any meaningful cooperation between them will go a long way in raising the level of trust and confidence in South Asia.

The rise in the extent, level and spread of class – based insurgency in India is also likely to raise the level of understanding and cooperation between the two countries and result in a no-interference in the internal affairs pacts for the other.

We, therefore, clearly see that although bogged down in a hostile and opposing position against each other at the moment under some domestic, regional and international compulsions, the long run interest of both countries lies squarely in mutual respect and cooperation and as the dictates of the time has starting unfolding this reality to both of them one sees a lot of hope for a more forceful resurgence of peace process and effective, meaningful and inclusion CBMs with a potential to change the course of history in the region.

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