

Areas of Engagement and Security Threats between India and Pakistan

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Abstract

Pakistan has its longest border with India and its main security threats have mainly emerged from India. Pakistan is also facing Indian hostility and its military development is mainly to secure itself from Indian aggression. Pakistan feel threatened from India as India is a large, economically stable and militarily strong neighbor of Pakistan. History shows that relation between India and Pakistan since their independence remained tense and some times remained worst. Number of talks, discussions and dialogues have been arranged but their results did not solve issues between them. This article is emphasizing on the specific steps which are taken by Pakistan and India in order to improve relations and to minimize the threats. Over the past years, India and Pakistan have been taking steps towards improving their bilateral relations but lacked in their implementation. Both states will have to follow the policy of peaceful co-existence. As a matter of policy, Pakistan is now trying to promote normalization of ties with India. Both states need to develop economic and socio-cultural co-operation for healthy relations between them. Peace is a pre-requisite for the development and growth of the people of both sides. Expansion of population contacts, trade shows, economic conferences, parliamentarian dialogues, release of prisoners, most favored nation status and relaxation in visa policies are good engagements towards normalization and betterment of relations. These engagements would help both India and Pakistan to resolve their long standing issues and it will take time.

Key Words: Security Threats, Engagement, Dialogues, Peaceful Co-existence, Confidence Building Measures.

Security Threats

Most important concern for Pakistan is its security from overt and covert forces from internal and external sources. Pakistan has always supported the

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policy of peace for itself and for the world. Internal political, economic and social unrest, ethnic and sectarian strife are the major threats to Pakistan's security. "Pakistan's fear for its security arises not only from the historical pattern of enmity, but also from the asymmetry of power in the South Asian region. Power is dependent on many factors, one of which is the size of country, which includes territory and population" (Mahdi, 1999:16). Pakistan has its longest border with India and its main security threats have mainly emerged from India. Pakistan is also facing Indian hostility and its military development is mainly to secure itself from Indian aggression. Pakistan feel threatened from India as India is a large, economically stable and militarily strong neighbour of Pakistan. India is having superior offensive capability on land, air and at sea. Indian conventional military threat is more serious than the nuclear one. "The nuclear weapons have not posed new security threat between India and Pakistan but it has threatened U.S interests in South Asia. The nuclearization of South Asia has serious concerns for U.S policy makers. (Haider, 2002 Spring). Both states have not signed NPT and CTBT. India claiming both treaties to be discriminatory which divides the world into have's and have not's and Pakistan has linked its signing policy with India, as if India will sign then Pakistan will sign. It is also important to see whether India is a political, economic, social or just a military threat to Pakistan. India has superiority over Pakistan regarding population, GDP, external trade, foreign investment and conventional forces are concerned.

The uncertain relationship between India and Pakistan is structured around the issue of Kashmir. At a more fundamental level, the regional configurations depend more than ever of global parameters. The ways India and Pakistan adjust themselves and define their bilateral equation in relation to global dynamics. Four wars (1947-48, 1965, 1971, and 1999), unresolved Kashmir issue and some other conflicts have strengthened the tension and distrust between India and Pakistan. These wars are unforgettable part of Pakistani nation's history. "The most important lesson is that Pakistan must have political, economic and assured deterrence capability to forestall aggression from all quarters. Pakistan needs a long spell of peace but a nation's dedication to peace and adherence to the principles of peaceful settlement of international disputes do not by themselves constitute sufficient guarantees, that it will be left unmolested in its peaceful existence. For as long as there are disputes and conflicts in the region of geographical, political and economic interest to a nation, latent threats to its sovereignty will continue to exist" (Ahmad, http://www.defencejournal.com/april98/security_and_defence2.htm). The expansion and modernization of the Indian armed forces gives India a numerical and technological advantage over Pakistan. The gaps between the Indian air force and navies with Pakistani air force and naval capabilities are much larger.

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After the nuclearization of India and Pakistan in 1998, the importance of security and stability between them got much attention from the world. A race in the field of nuclear and missile technology has been started and for these developments both countries are spending a large amount of money on their defense capabilities by ignoring the social security. The money is much more than their actual defense requirements. Both share a long border but miles apart in regard to bilateral relations. Hatred, mistrust and suspicion are the hurdles towards friendly relations between them. (Javaid, 2006:5-6)

Both countries have witnessed their relations starting from confrontation to little co-operation and again confrontation, crisis and conflict. From 1965 war to Tashkent Agreement then the 1971 war to Simla Agreement, nuclearization of both states in 1998 then the Lahore Declaration, limited war of Kargil in 1999 then the Agra Summit in 2001, confrontation on India-Pakistan border (2001-2002) in the form of military buildups then the détente in relations came at 12th SAARC Summit 2004 in Islamabad. Proper dialogue started in February 2004. An eight point composite dialogue was announced including all the out standing disputes from Sir Creek, Wuller Barrage, Siachen, Kashmir, terrorism, drug trafficking, economic and commercial co-operation, peace and security including CBMs and promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields. (Dawn, 19 February 2004)

Every year in SAARC Summit same commitments between India and Pakistan are discussed but very little has been implemented. Hopes were also high in 17th SAARC Summit in November 2011 at Maldives. At the end of year 2011, Pakistan has granted Most Favorite Nation MFN status to India, Indian trade show in February 2012 and now the trade conference “Dividends” in Pakistan is a good start after a pause of two years between India- Pakistan dialogue.

History of India-Pakistan relations show that at number of occasions, both have negotiated but failed to implement their signed agreements. Number of CBMs have been discussed but very little have been implemented. Agra Summit did not produce successful results due to Pakistan’s stance on Kashmir issue and India was strictly demanding the solution of cross border terrorism. There is much confusion that what kind of solution of Kashmir will satisfy India, Pakistan and the Kashmiri people. Both countries should negotiate and should remain in a process for year to year basis then it would produce the solution of the Kashmir problem.

Both states are possessing nuclear weapons and any clash between them would be disastrous. Realistically, the new emerging world order tends to avoid open confrontations. To think whether it’s a good policy to use force against India, as it has serious implications for Pakistan e.g., the Kargil war put Pakistan in economic as well as in military crisis. Kenneth Boulding rightly

says that “we must recognize that the people whose decisions determine the policies and actions of nations do not respond to the objective facts of the situation, whatever that may mean, but to their image of the situation. It is what we think the world is like and not what it is really like, that determines our behavior” (Boulding, 1969:423). To ensure the physical safety of the population of Pakistan, both countries have stake in normalization. They should find ways of coping threats or resolving them.

Heavy military spending is a hindrance for their socio-economic development. Both states are developing and procuring sophisticated lethal weapons and testing nuclear capable missiles. People are suffering greatly and economic deprivation is a serious issue.

Terrorism is another bone of contention between these two. India has linked Kashmir issue to cross-border terrorism sponsored by Pakistan. In order to remove this allegation ex-President Musharraf had stopped cross border movements of militants and had also banned some organizations in Pakistan. Terrorism is a common threat to both Pakistan and India and it should be controlled through serious joint efforts by both states. Pakistan is also accusing India of fomenting an insurgency in the Baluchistan province which should be checked by the Indian government. Issues of Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, Wuller Barrage and Baghlihar dams should be resolved through dialogue.

Expansion of Population Contacts

CBMs can act as a basis for improving India-Pakistan relations. Peace and prosperity in India and Pakistan can not be achieved unless both work together towards co-operation. CBMs will raise the level of mutual trust between them. Expand population contacts within India and Pakistan and to increase the ease of obtaining visas, visits of politicians, lawyers and journalists have done and cultural exchanges are also progressing. Ex-President Musharraf encouraged people to people contact between India and Pakistan which is important for improving the relations. Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani’s government materializes the people to people contacts in 2011 after a gap of three, four years. Parliamentarians, academicians, journalists, lawyers, writers and students, actors, actresses of both sides have visited each other’s state. History of CBMs between India and Pakistan is not very impressive when looking at the implementation side. “Freedom of movement in terms of greater people to people contact and now trade and commerce opportunities can act as a catalyst for change both in the Kashmir as well as between India and Pakistan”. (Masood, 2005). Kashmir issue is a main cause of threat 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). U.S is backing and

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encouraging the negotiations between India and Pakistan in order to ease tension and making friendly relations.

Pakistani Media is also playing a vital role towards molding public opinion and for developing a positive mindset regarding India. "Aman ke Aasha is a good step in this regard by Jang group of Pakistan and Daily Times of India, in which different seminars/conferences were conducted between Indian and Pakistani people. Artists of both sides were exchanged in their dramas and movies.

India- Pakistan Talks/ Dialogues

Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) have been facilitated four rounds of Parliamentarian Dialogues between India and Pakistan. First dialogue was held in Islamabad on 6-7 January, 2011 and second was held on August 18-19, 2011 in New Delhi. In both dialogues, the delegations showed complete agreement for peace, security and stability be established between India and Pakistan. Pak- India Parliamentarian Dialogue III was held on January 17-18 2012 in Islamabad. Delegation visited Parliament and witnessed the proceedings of Senate of Pakistan. Member of Parliaments of both sides interacted on the theme of trade and economic relations between India and Pakistan. The fourth round of the dialogue was held in Delhi, Patna and Bihar (India) on August 23-25, 2012. The delegation discussed the relaxation of visa policy as a pre-requisite for the growth and promotion of trade and economic activities.

India-Pakistan hold talks on Siachen Issue for two days on 11th June 2012 by Defense Secretaries who headed a delegation level meeting. There have been calls to find out solution to the long-standing dispute. Many times different talks on Siachen issue were arranged but always failed to reach any agreement. Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, General Pervaiz Kiyani called for the demilitarization of this glacier as it has killed many soldiers. Both countries should sit together to resolve this issue but India is demanding re-determination of positions. Indian Defense Minister A.K Antony has said that "New Delhi would insist on proper authentication by Pakistan of the troop position in Siachen before any disengagement is under taken and cautioned against expecting any dramatic result from the talks in Pakistan. He had told the Indian Parliament that India had neither hardened nor softened the position on authentication. India wants Pakistan to authenticate the Actual Ground Position Line, both on the maps and on the ground, as it occupies most of the dominating posts on the Saltoro Ridge. Pakistan in turn has been insisting on maintaining the pre- 1972 troop positions as agreed in the Simla Agreement". The talks on Sir Creek were held a week after the talks on Siachen glacier as a part of dialogue process which the two sides resumed in February 2011. Sir Creek is a disputed territory between India and Pakistan in

the Rann of Kutch marshlands, which opens up into the Arabian Sea. Sir Creek divides the Kutch region of Gujrat in India and the Sindh Province of Pakistan. (Dawn, 19 June 2012). No significant movement in talks on disputed Sir Creek issue by both sides was seen. India- Pakistan Foreign Minister level talks were postponed which was scheduled in July, 2012 , as the dates were clashing with the Presidential poll in India. (The News, 26 June 2012).

Pakistani President's Visit to India

By the last seven years, Pakistani head of the state, President Asif Ali Zardari made the first trip to India in April 2012. President Zardari visited a Muslim shrine in Ajmer, South-West of the Indian capital. "After the improvement in trade relations, marked by Pakistan recently agreeing to India's long standing demand of barring only those Indian goods that are on a negative list, Mr. Zardari lunch with the Prime Minister of India in a conducive atmosphere in the Indian capital will push the sense along that the mood is not one of hostility although Islamabad has done little to bring the Mumbai attackers to justice" (*The Asian Age*, <http://www.bbc.co.uk>).

Release of Prisoners

Pakistan and India have started playing their part of confidence building measures as India has released Pakistani Scientist Khaleel Chisty at the age of 80 years was released by India on 10th May 2012 after spending 20 years in Indian jail. On June 27, 2012 Pakistan has released 311 Indian fishermen, Pakistan has also released Indian prisoner Surjeet Singh, in order to do its part of confidence building measures on 28th June 2012, who had spent 27 years in jail. India released five Pakistani prisoners from different jails of India on 6th July 2012. Public opinion in both the countries is in favour of peace and prosperity. The CBMs are likely to raise the level of mutual trust till these are not tilted in favour of either of the two parties. (Javaid, 2012:26).

New Visa Policy 2012

To increase co-operation, the new visa policy between India and Pakistan would bring closer, the people of two countries. Indian Foreign Minister S.M Krishna visited Pakistan for three days and signed a new visa agreement on 8th September 2012. This visa policy introduces new categories for group tourist visas and pilgrim visas and eases restrictions on traveling by businessmen, senior citizens and persons of one country married to a citizen of the other country. For the first time, citizens aged above sixty five will be given a forty five days single entry visa on arrival. Multiple cities, one year visas will be issued to businessmen on the basis of their turnover. The relations between the two countries have improved in recent months and trade is also increasing between them.

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Revival of India-Pakistan Cricket

After the interval of five years of any cricket series between India and Pakistan, a short series in which three one-day International and two twenty 20 matches were played between India and Pakistan from 25 December 2012 to 6th January 2013. Pakistan won one-day series by 2-1 and twenty 20 series was drawn by 1-1. In their last bilateral series in 2007, hosted by India was won by India 1-0 in test series and 3-2 in ODIs. This was a good effort by both states to revive the cricket between them. Through these activities people to people contact will increase and it will benefit the governments in a long run.

Trade and Economic Integration Indian Trade Show

Trade and economic integration can be used as an instrument to counter the threat and to integrate Kashmir into trade agreements is also important. India and China could trade despite having political issues, why not India and Pakistan. Indian trade show/exhibition in Lahore Expo Centre from 11-13 February is a good start to dismantle barriers hindering bilateral trade. Commerce Ministers of both states had visited each other's countries on a reciprocal basis. It's a time to increase trade with each other from 1 percent of their global trade to more. Indian Minister for Commerce, Industry and Textile, Mr. Anand Sharma stated in his address to Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 14th February that "lets write a new chapter in the history of the two countries. Lets make the most of changing economic dynamics of the modern world that have posed both threats and opportunities to us, wants to engage Pakistan and write a new essay of trust and friendship to change the future of this region".(Zaheed, 2012, <http://tribune.com.pk>).The two countries are close to various economic pacts during this minister's visit to Pakistan. Easy visa policies, opening of bank branches and many other steps are under consideration of both sides.

Pakistan's federal cabinet on 29th Febraury 2012 opened the doors for trade with India by raising the number of items that can be imported from the country from 1,946 to almost 5,600. From January 2013, India will be able to export all its products to Pakistan without restrictions.(Khan, 2012) .Federal Cabinet had unanimously approved switching over from a positive to negative list trade regime with India. Pakistan believes that normalization of trade with India is in the interest of Pakistan because it would help strengthen national economy and boost economic activities in the region. The volume of bilateral trade is expected to reach \$6 billion by 2014, mostly to the benefit of Indian exporters. However government of Pakistan stated that full protection would be given to the local industry. Defense laws would be invoked in case of any loss to national industry against a surge in imports from India. Indian

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commerce minister, Mr. Sharma said that “strengthening economic engagement between India and Pakistan lies at the heart of building enduring peace and stability in this region and flourishing trade is the biggest CBM between any two nations”. Both states should discover the benefits of co-operation and then they can handle the threats of violence and terrorism more effectively as compare to blaming each other.

Pakistan’s Trade Show in India

On April 12th 2012, Pakistan has launched a four day exhibition in the name of “Life style Pakistan” in New Delhi. Pakistan has brought more than 650 business people to India for this trade show. This exhibition gave hopes to India and Pakistan that boosting trade could help peace talks including on Kashmir and other issues. (<http://dawn.com/2012/04/13>)

Two countries have approved a MFN (Most Favored-Nation) accord, reduce taxes and relaxed new visa policy. This Pakistani exhibition follows a successful Indian trade show in Pakistan.

Most Favored Nation Status

Trade between India and Pakistan will promote bilateral as well as regional economic co-operation. It’s an encouraging step that both states have removed the trade barriers for their mutual benefit and giving the status of MFN to India is a good step towards encouraging economic relations. Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Hina Rabbani Khar stated that Pakistan has decided to grant the MFN status to India because India agreed to resume the dialogue process after a pause of two years, therefore such a step would be essential to further this process. We want progress on not just one but a number of issues with India on permanent basis besides normalization of overall bilateral relations (Khan, 2012). Pakistan finds it difficult to sell its people the idea of granting the MFN status to India. The apprehension among the business community is that the Pakistani markets will be flooded with Indian goods once India gets the MFN status.

Pakistan is facing the challenge that jeopardizes the viability of the emerging trade relations between India and Pakistan, is difa-e-Pakistan council, which is a new alliance of Islamist groups is campaigning against the warming relations with India. They are demanding to withdraw government form its decision to offer MFN status to India. Both countries have hardliners on their side. Government should involve these people in the bilateral confidence-building measures for they can be tackled better by accommodating them in the negotiation process and not isolating them.

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Economic Conference 2012

The second Pakistan-India Economic Conference “Dividends” was held under the aegis of Aman ki Aasha on 7th May 2012 for two days, a joint initiative of Jang Group of Pakistan and The Times of India for improvement of relations. Delegations from both sides agreed that through trade people would be benefited, improvement in people to people contact would come and several other things would be ended which acted as hindrance in bilateral relations. “The aim of the conference is to explore new trade avenues and to create an enabling environment for enhanced economic activities between the neighboring countries” (<http://www.the-news.com.pk/article-47909>).

This conference got an immense response from the officials, political leaders and top businessmen in Pakistan. The top business tycoons from India participated in it and they had interacted with their Pakistani counterparts. Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Yousaf Raza Gillani assured the delegates of this conference that federal government will completely co-operate for expanding trade ties between India and Pakistan. (*The News International*, May 9, 2012).

Both states should now understand that when trade starts, jobs will be created on both sides and it will be beneficial and then slowly confidence will come back and terrorism will go down and investment and factories and all will follow. So the expectations must be at the right level, no need to expect too much, it will take few years, don't expect overnight results. Young generation of both sides want peace. (Advani, 2012: 14). The dangers to the peace process from non-state actors would be neutralized once the benefits of bilateral trade reach the common man of India and Pakistan. It was also recommended that the long standing disputes from Siachen to Kashmir may receive a boost through the normalization of trade ties. (*Dawn*, May 9, 2012).

A message brought by Indian delegates comprised of leading businessmen, industrialists, entrepreneurs represented various fields and officials from the confederation of Indian Industry that “Pakistan and India should wage a war of trade, which will ultimately help both countries live in peaceful co-existence and result in the betterment of the people on either side of the border” (*The News*, May 7, 2012).

To call on the private sector of both countries to join in a collaborative undertaking to build on India's extra ordinary success in the IT sector to create the basis for a new IT sector in Pakistan. It will provide to them real social and economic benefits. The growing energy requirements and search for new energy resources in Central Asia, both India and Pakistan will co-operate for their benefits. As Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (TAPI) have signed a gas pipeline project in 2012, starting from Turkmenistan and ending

at India. This is an encouraging step taken by Pakistani government. India should acknowledge it that stable and prosperous Pakistan is in the benefit of India.

Pakistan- India Management Summit was held on 20-21 September 2012 in Lahore. The theme was "leadership for new economic realities". It was a good effort by Aman ke Aasha and Nutshell forum. Businessmen from both countries sat together and discussed various options of co-operation in economic field.

Conclusion

Mutual suspicion and distrust in the hearts of the leaders should be removed through consistency and proper implementation of peace policies and it really depends on how much each side is willing to do this. Pakistan and India should resolve their bilateral problems and the mentality of success of one is the loss of the other should be removed and both states should come close for the betterment and welfare of their people. Both states should review the progress made on the India-Pakistan roadmap to peace which the two sides agreed again and again in their discussions and dialogues.

Without creativity and commitment to dispute resolution, it is difficult to imagine their policy of peaceful engagements in the future. Future of Pakistan-India relations depends upon the type of compromise which might be accepted by both sides. Both should climb down from their hardened positions on Kashmir and take concrete steps towards the resolution of one of the world's oldest dispute. It's a tough exercise to give concessions and to continue negotiations otherwise the past rivalries will continue. Normalization of relations between India and Pakistan will, no doubt take time and it requires sincere and loyal leadership instead of point scoring from both sides. For lasting peace and stability in the region, Pakistan and India will have to develop the social, economic and political condition of their respective states. Pakistan's foreign policy of friendship only with U.S and isolation with rest of the powers is faulty. Need to develop strategic relations with Bangladesh, Iran, Turkey and Russia in order to counter the threat from India. Now a positive trend is prevailing in India- Pakistan relations that the process of talks/dialogue between foreign secretaries and foreign ministers has been initiated again and they are discussing about conflicts ranging from Siachen, Wuller Barrage, Sir Creek, and nuclear confidence building. Trade shows, economic conferences, parliamentarian dialogues, people to people contacts, release of prisoners, most favored nation status and relaxation in visa policies are good steps towards normalization and betterment of relations. Success in keeping these engagements alive will require by both states to be much more invested in the peace process than they are at present. Both countries should carry on all these engagements on regular basis and this will encourage confidence building between India and Pakistan and it will slowly lead the path towards conflict resolution.

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