

Nuclear Mainstreaming Pakistan

Dr Tughral Yamin *

Abstract

For the past seventy years, nuclear non-proliferation has been the top US foreign policy priority. Towards that end America has been successful in keeping the number of officially recognised number of Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) limited to five. There are four more nations that possess nuclear weapons outside the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) including India and Pakistan. Different non-proliferation standards have been applied to these two South Asian rivals ever since they became *de facto* NWS in the summer of 1998. India has been the recipient of special favours, with the US signing a civil nuclear deal with India in 2005 and helping it get a special waiver from the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG) in 2008. This set a precedent for other countries seeking nuclear commerce with India to grant similar favours. Pakistan has been mostly left out in the cold. Sensing Pakistan's keenness to acquire nuclear legitimacy, in August 2015 a joint study by two US think-tanks set certain pre-conditions that would allow it to become a 'normal' nuclear state. These included *inter alia* pledges to give up its Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs), not using the veto against the Fissile Missile Cut-off (FMCT) Treaty at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and not letting its territory be used for terrorist attacks against India. The reaction in Pakistan was predictable and there were calls to reject such suggestions altogether. The purpose of this article is to examine the US proposal with an open mind and to determine if at all it represents a window of opportunity.

Key words: Arms Control and Disarmament, Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Normal Nuclear Pakistan, India.

* The author is Associate Dean at the Centre for International Peace & Stability (CIPS), NUST Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (NIPCONS), National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) in Islamabad, Pakistan.

The International Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime

The issue of nuclear non-proliferation came to fore in the post-World War II era as US foreign policy focused on the pursuit of global leadership.¹ One way of maintaining international preeminence was by restricting the membership of Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) to an exclusive five (US, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China). This was done by enforcing an aggressive nuclear non-proliferation agenda based on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The non-proliferation priorities of the US government (USG) varied over the years from one administration to the other. However, the guiding principle has always remained the same - unrestricted spread of nuclear weapons is detrimental to regional and international peace and stability.² For this purpose, the USG uses every resource at its disposal from diplomatic, economic and military to stop, prevent and contain proliferation activities of countries that in its estimation are likely to threaten global strategic stability. A raft of international non-proliferation initiatives and instruments has been put in place to prevent the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons. NPT forms the central pillar of the international non-proliferation regime. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) acts as the watchdog that ensures all countries abide by the international injunctions on nuclear non-proliferation.

Although the violations to the NPT are clearly identifiable; there are no standard rules for activating non-proliferation triggers. The treatment meted out to nuclear proliferators depends on their international credentials of acceptability. Four NPT non-adherent countries are known to possess nuclear weapons i.e. India, Pakistan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Israel. In each case, national security is cited as the principal reason for acquiring nuclear weapons e.g. Israel has an undeclared nuclear programme because it finds itself in a particularly hostile neighbourhood. The programme is tolerated because of its special relationship with the US. While, allowing Israel to have its own nuclear programme, the US has disabused technically advanced allies such as Australia, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Germany from acquiring

¹ Sverre Lodgaard, ed., *Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation: Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World?* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 28.

² Paul Lettow, *Strengthening the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime*, report 54 (New York: Council for Foreign Relations, 2010), 12.

nuclear weapons by providing them extended deterrence.³ Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) are deployed in Europe even today.⁴

The US non-proliferation sanctions during 1975-1979 actually deterred allies like South Africa from acquiring nuclear weapons.⁵ However, the same did not work with DPRK/North Korea which withdrew from the NPT in January 2003 and has tested nuclear devices six times since then. The Korean peninsula has been a nuclear flashpoint since the advent of the Cold War. The turmoil began with the Korean War (1950 to 1953) during which the North Koreans supported by the Chinese fought the US-led United Nations forces. As the fortunes of war ebbed and flowed, several nuclear capable US B29 bombers were deployed in the region as a deliberate act of nuclear posturing.⁶ After three years of war, an armistice halted hostilities. The US and DPRK are technically still at war and the 38th Parallel is one of the most heavily defended ceasefire lines in the world. Thousands of US forces deployed in South Korea remain in a state of readiness to protect and defend South Korea in case of an attack. Impoverished North Korea remains a nuclear bad boy whom the US has been unable to discipline.

Nearer home, Iran has been kept in check through stringent non-proliferation measures, which include diplomatic isolation, economic sanctions and military means. Iran had a covert nuclear programme that was stopped through various means. Cyber-attacks were launched to damage its centrifuge machines, the scientists involved in the nuclear programme were assassinated and several layers of sanctions were piled up to force it into accepting demands within the Joint Comprehensive Plan

³ Gene Gerzhoy, "Alliance Coercion and Nuclear Restraint: How the United States Thwarted West Germany's Nuclear Ambition," *International Security* 39, no. 4 (2015): 91-129.

⁴ Steve Andreasen, Simon Lunn and Isabelle Williams, "Warning Bells around Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Europe" (Washington, D.C.: Nuclear Threat Initiative, July 21, 2016), <http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/warning-bells-around-tactical-nuclear-weapons-europe/>.

⁵ Nicholas L. Miller, "The Secret Success of Nonproliferation Sanctions," *International Organization* 68, no.4 (2014): 913-944, http://www.nicholaslmiller.com/uploads/1/9/7/5/19753277/sanctions_march_2014.pdf.

⁶ Office of the Historian, "Atomic Diplomacy," US State Department, accessed February 17, 2017, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/atomic>.

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of Action (JCPOA).⁷ This agreement has put a halt on Iran's uranium enrichment programme and has arguably set back its breakout time to make a bomb by at least a dozen years.

In March 2003, the US invaded Iraq to disarm it of its non-existent Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). This form of aggressive disarmament was based on fabricated intelligence. The aim was to remove Saddam Hussain from power in oil rich Iraq and bring about regime change. In June 1981, Israel carried out an air raid to destroy Iraq's nuclear reactor in Osirak,⁸ and repeated the same action in Syria to destroy its covert reactor in al-Kibar in September 2007.⁹ In September 2013, the threat of an attack on its chemical weapon stockpiles by the US was used to force Syria to sign the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and allow the destruction of its chemical weapon stockpiles by international inspectors operating under the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).¹⁰

It is not the US or Israel alone that have adopted kinetic measures to nip the nuclear programme of a hostile country in the bud. There is credible information to indicate that there were plans to mount an air raid to destroy the Pakistani uranium enrichment facility in Kahuta in 1982 by the Indians in collusion with the Israelis. The Indians were obviously inspired by the Israeli air raid on the Iraqi nuclear facility at Osirak in June 1981. In the end, the plan failed to materialise because of fears that a possible Pakistani response may lead to an escalation that would be hard to control.¹¹ The contingencies to destroy or capture Pakistan's nuclear weapons may still exist with countries that feel threatened e.g. Condoleeza Rice in her confirmation hearing as the US Secretary of State in 2005 said that her government had noted the possibility of Pakistan's nuclear

⁷ US State Department, "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," accessed November 5, 2016, <http://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/iran/jcpoa/>.

⁸ "35 Years on, IAF Pilots Recall Daring Mission to Bomb Saddam's Nuke Reactor," *Times of Israel*, June 4, 2016, <http://www.timesofisrael.com/35-years-on-iaf-pilots-recall-daring-mission-to-bomb-saddams-nuke-reactor/>.

⁹ Michael V. Hayden, *Playing to the Edge: American Intelligence in the Age of Terror* (New York: Penguin Press, 2016), 264-265.

¹⁰ OPCW, "Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons Completed" (The Hague: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, January 4, 2016), <https://www.opcw.org/news/article/destruction-of-syrian-chemical-weapons-completed/>.

¹¹ Sushant Singh, "In Fact: Did India Plan a Covert Military Attack on a Pakistani Nuclear Reactor?" *Indian Express*, October 26, 2015, <http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/in-fact-did-india-plan-a-covert-military-attack-on-a-pakistani-nuclear-reactor/>.

weapons falling into the hands of extremists in case of a coup and were prepared to deal with the situation.¹²

Application of Non-Proliferation Standards in South Asia

From the international perspective, South Asia has long been a nuclear flashpoint. India has a nuclear programme that predates its independence and it was the first country in South Asia to test a nuclear device in 1974. Indian explanation that it was only a Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) was not taken at face value and effective measures were put in place to control the illegitimate movement of fissile material that could be used for fabrication of a bomb. This led to the creation of what is now known as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). In May 1998, India again took a lead in testing nuclear weapons. This time there was no ambiguity about the nature of the tests. After a gap of two weeks, Pakistan responded and the subcontinent became a nuclear region. Ever since this cataclysmic change, the issue of recognising India and Pakistan as *de jure* NWS has been a subject of intense international debate. To be fair, initially sanctions were imposed on both India and Pakistan. The global non-proliferation lobby led by the West insisted that both countries should sign the NPT and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), to merit any kind of recognition as NWS. This approach did not work out because it effectively meant that both countries had to give up their nuclear weapon programmes and cease production of weapon grade fissile materials.

Meanwhile, a more tolerant and accommodative approach also became discernible particularly in case of India. In 1998, G8 – a group of eight of the wealthiest nations in the world namely Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia, UK and the US – met in Birmingham in the wake of the Indian nuclear explosions and decided against levying any harsh sanctions against it.¹³ From June 1998 to September 2000, the then US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot and Indian Minister of External Affairs Jaswant Singh met fourteen times to discuss items on the security and non-proliferation agenda, as well as the potential for wider economic

¹² Jeffrey Goldberg and Marc Ambinder, “The Pentagon’s Secret Plans to Secure Pakistan’s Nuclear Arsenal” (Washington, D.C.: Nuclear Threat Initiative, November 9, 2011), <http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/the-pentagons-secret-plans-to-secure-pakistans-nuclear-arsenal/>.

¹³ Tughral Yamin, *The Evolution of Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia* (Islamabad: Army Press, 2014), 163.

and strategic cooperation between their two countries. The details of these meetings are described in Strobe Talbot's book *Engaging India*. This engagement just after the nuclear explosions was instrumental in the evolution of India-US relations into a strategic partnership in times to come.¹⁴

Of course Russia, a long-time friend did not leave India in the lurch after the explosions. There were no angry statements to cut off aid or recall envoys. In fact, it was business as usual between the two countries. On May 14, 1998, a day after India tested a nuclear device for the second time, a meeting of the Joint Indo-Russian Council on technical and scientific collaboration was held as scheduled in Moscow in an 'atmosphere of goodwill and friendship.' On May 15, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy, Vladimir I. Kuroyedov reiterated that the transfer of warship Admiral Gorshkov to India would take place on time and that Russian warships would take part in joint exercises with the Indian Navy in the coming autumn. On May 19, it was made known that Russia's Atomic Energy Minister, Yevgeny Adamov, would be visiting India to sign a supplement to the 1988 agreement regarding the construction of an atomic power plant in Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu.¹⁵ This nuclear cooperation continues to date. In October 2016, the Russians promised two more units (the fifth and the sixth) to the Kudankulam nuclear complex.¹⁶

Over the last decade, the US has gone out of its way to legitimise India's status as a nuclear power. In July 2005, it offered India a civil nuclear deal.¹⁷ This was meant to end India's nuclear isolation and open the gates for nuclear trade with countries possessing nuclear technology

¹⁴ See for details, Strobe Talbot, *Engaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy, and the Bomb*, 1st ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

¹⁵ Jyotsna Bakshi, "Russia's Post-Pokhran Dilemma," *Strategic Analysis* 22, no. 5 (2008): 721-736, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/09700169808458848?needAccess=true>.

¹⁶ Shubhajit Roy, "India-Russia National Summit: Focus on Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant Pact," *Indian Express*, October 12, 2016, <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/india-russia-annual-summit-focus-on-kudankulam-nuclear-plant-pact-modi-putin-brics-go-3077603/>.

¹⁷ Adil Sultan Muhammad, "Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Cooperation Agreement: Implications on South Asian Security Environment" (Washington, D.C.: Henry L. Stimson Center, 2006), https://www.stimson.org/sites/default/files/file-attachments/AdilSultan_1.pdf.

and natural uranium.¹⁸ A special waiver was given to India in 2008 with clear US support ‘exempting it from the NSG rules governing civilian nuclear trade.’¹⁹ Even Pakistan was arm twisted into not creating any hurdles for the NSG waiver for India.²⁰ The aim of this special favour was to ‘maintain India’s cooperation on trade and to counter China’s growing influence.’²¹ This allowed India to sign nuclear cooperation agreements with Japan, Russia, France, the UK, South Korea, Canada, Argentina, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Namibia. These countries obviously had their eyes on the potentially huge nuclear market existing in India.

The USG has promised to help India acquire the membership of four nuclear entities i.e. the NSG, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Australia group and the Wassenaar Agreement.²² India made it into the MTCR in June 2016.²³ The Indian application for admission into the NSG came up for consideration at Seoul in its annual meeting in June 2016.²⁴ It had the full support of the US but China and other concerned countries prevented India’s membership. India has made several attempts to bring China to its side but in vain. This includes visits by high ranking delegations to Beijing and intense lobbying on the sidelines of the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) meeting held in Goa in October 2016. Its attempt to get admission into NSG in

¹⁸ Ashley Tellis, “Enriching Agreement: The Nuclear Pact with the US could Mark the End of India’s Nuclear Apartheid,” *India Today*, October 17, 2005, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/nuclear-pact-with-us-could-mark-the-end-of-indias-nuclear-apartheid/1/192829.html>.

¹⁹ NTI, “Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG)” (Washington, D.C.: Nuclear Threat Initiative, January 31, 2017), <http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/nuclear-suppliers-group-nsg/>.

²⁰ Baqir Sajjad Syed, “Ex-Envoy Sheds Light on Mystery about Failure to Block IAEA India-Specific Deal,” *Dawn*, December 19, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1227397>.

²¹ “No Exceptions for a Nuclear India,” editorial, *New York Times*, June 4, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/05/opinion/sunday/no-exceptions-for-a-nuclear-india.html?_r=1.

²² P.R. Chari, ed., *Indo-US Nuclear Deal: Seeking Synergy in Bilateralism* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2009), 218.

²³ Harsh V. Pant, “India’s NSG Membership, The Beijing Bottleneck,” *Daily News & Analysis*, June 13, 2016, <http://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/column-india-s-nsg-membershi-the-beijing-bottleneck-2222669>.

²⁴ Douglas Busvine, “Nuclear Club Eyes Indian Inclusion, But Risks Pakistan’s Ire,” *Reuters*, November 24, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-nuclear-idUSKBN0TD11K20151124>.

November 2016 also failed to pass muster.²⁵ The campaign has, however, far from ended.

Implications of the US Proposal to ‘Mainstream’ Nuclear Pakistan

It is quite natural that like India, Pakistan also wants to be recognised as a responsible nuclear state. This sentiment found expression in an article that appeared in a journal of the British think-tank Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) in January 2015.²⁶ In response a paper was published jointly by two American think-tanks in August 2015. The paper titled *A Normal Nuclear Pakistan* authored by Toby Dalton and Michael Krepon quite expectedly set the bar higher for Pakistan because of the so-called A.Q. Khan legacy and its impact on proliferation.²⁷ It also stated in no uncertain terms that Pakistan needs to limit the size of its allegedly fastest growing nuclear arsenal. Based on Western sources, the number of warheads with Pakistan is supposed to be 120. India, it is surmised, has 90 to 100 of these.²⁸ The authors echoed the prevailing thought in Western strategic circles that battlefield missiles are destabilising for strategic stability in South Asia. Pakistan’s point of view that these are meant to deter the Indian Cold Start /Pre-emptive Doctrine is not accepted as a valid reason. Pakistan has been advised not to create hurdles in the way of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva.²⁹ Pakistan’s claims that the Indian fissile material stockpiles of plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) are more than theirs is not accepted as a valid argument.³⁰ Instead it has been

²⁵ Jayanth Jacob, “India Hopes NSG Committee Meeting will Brighten its Entry Prospect,” *Hindustan Times*, November 5, 2016, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-hopes-nsg-committee-meeting-will-brighten-its-entry-prospect/story-D4mEUeMHSPmT5GgMHhzRXX.html>.

²⁶ Zahir Kazmi, “Normalising the Non-Proliferation Regime,” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 57, no. 1 (2015): 133-150.

²⁷ Toby Dalton and Michael Krepon, *A Normal Nuclear Pakistan*, report (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2015), 29-30, <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/NormalNuclearPakistan.pdf>.

²⁸ Tim Craig, “Report: Pakistan’s Nuclear Arsenal could Become the World’s Third-Biggest,” *Washington Post*, August 27, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/report-pakistans-nuclear-arsenal-could-become-the-worlds-third-biggest/2015/08/26/6098478a-4c0c-11e5-80c2-106ea7fb80d4_story.html.

²⁹ Dalton and Krepon, *A Normal Nuclear Pakistan*, 3.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

told that the production of additional fissile material stocks would prove to be a costly option.³¹

The Dalton-Krepon formula offers three tough propositions to Pakistan if it wants to become part of the nuclear mainstream. First of all, it must make changes in its nuclear policy. Second, it should embrace its already effective strategic deterrent in the service of political rather than military objectives. Third, it should formally conform to the norms of the international nuclear regime. The report also demands that a ‘normal’ nuclear Pakistan should not allow the use of its territory by extremist groups to attack India.³²

These broad ideas translate into five specific initiatives i.e. convert declaratory policy from ‘full-spectrum’ to ‘strategic’ deterrence; commit to a recessed deterrent posture and limit production of tactical nuclear weapons and delivery systems; separate civilian and military nuclear facilities; lift the veto on the FMCT negotiations; and sign the CTBT. These initiatives would signal restraint and adherence to global best practices of responsible nuclear stewardship.³³ The publication of the report was followed by official and unofficial overtures.

The choices offered to Pakistan under the terms of the ‘normal’ nuclear state proposal in the Dalton-Krepon report do not make it binding on India in any way to display similar behaviour. In fact in one of his articles, Krepon opposed the F16s deal to Pakistan on subsidised rates and insisted that it make full payment as penalty for its alleged ‘failure to clamp down on groups that attack its neighbours, while spending freely for nuclear arms.’³⁴ The deal was killed because the US Congress was plainly unhappy with its relations with Pakistan. However, this was not the end of the anti-Pakistan mood on Capitol Hill. In his address to the US Congress in June 2016, Narendra Modi talked of terrorism in the neighbourhood, clearly maligning Pakistan. He received repeated ovation from US lawmakers indicating that his ideas were resonating with them.³⁵ Modi’s strong campaign to isolate Pakistan has been carefully

³¹ Ibid., 15.

³² Ibid., 3-4.

³³ Ibid., 3-4.

³⁴ Michael Krepon, “Pakistan’s F-16s: Finding a Fair Price,” *Foreign Policy*, March 8, 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/03/08/pakistans-f-16s-finding-a-fair-price/>.

³⁵ Nicole Gaouette and Elise Labott, “Modi Addresses Congress as US-India Ties Bloom,” *CNNPolitics.com*, June 9, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/06/08/politics/modi-speech-u-s-congress-visit/>.

choreographed. There is indeed a method to the madness. The Indian security establishment claim that on the nuclear front Pakistan's intelligence agencies are in league with terrorists.³⁶ This approach lets them kill two birds with one stone i.e. put a brake on Pakistan's nuclear programme and to deny it advanced conventional weapons platforms.

The Pakistani Response

The Government of Pakistan (GOP) has been extremely tentative about the Dalton-Krepon normal nuclear state offer. Before Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Washington on October 22, 2015, it was reported that the USG was exploring the option to pave the way for a civil nuclear deal with Pakistan like the one concluded with India in 2005, and that the matter would come up for discussion during the visit. There was mild expectation in official circles in Washington that Pakistan would agree not to deploy its long-range missiles and in return the US could support an eventual waiver for Pakistan from the 48-nation NSG.³⁷ Cognizant of the fact that their nuclear policy and weapons had acquired a sacrosanct status within the country, the Government was wary of conveying an impression that it would be willing to make any compromises on national security interests.³⁸ Predictably, the Prime Minister remained non-committal and did not give any assurances to his hosts about the offer to make his country a 'normal' nuclear state. The official policy was clarified in a Washington presser by Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Aizaz A. Chaudhry.³⁹ He clarified that the reason for producing low-yield nuclear weapons was to deter India from launching operations under the nuclear threshold within the ambit of its so called Cold Start Doctrine (CSD).⁴⁰

Most of the internal debate on television talk shows, print media and intellectual forums has hovered around an indignant rejection of the proposal to mainstream Pakistan on unfavourable terms. The prevailing

³⁶ Hein G. Kiessling, *Faith, Unity, Discipline: The Inter-Service-Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan* (London: Hurst & Company, 2016), 181-182.

³⁷ "US Considering Nuclear Deal With Pakistan: Report," *Dawn*, October 8, 2015, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1211598>.

³⁸ "No Compromise on National Interests during Talks with US: Sartaj Aziz," *Daily Pakistan Global*, October 18, 2015, <https://en.dailypakistan.com.pk/headline/no-compromise-on-national-interests-during-talks-with-us-sartaj-aziz-956/>.

³⁹ Editor's Note: Now Pakistan's Ambassador to the US.

⁴⁰ Anwar Iqbal, "Pakistan has Built Low-Yield Nuclear Weapons to Counter Indian Aggression," *Dawn*, October 20, 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1214157/pakistan-has-built-low-yield-nuclear-weapons-to-counter-indian-aggression>.

sentiment was that the proposal would place unnecessary restrictions on the country. In conferences organised by think-tanks in the capital around the time that Dalton-Krepon report was published, most speakers were highly critical of the offer. Academics belonging to the strategic community wrote opinion pieces against the idea of nuclear mainstreaming on the terms and conditions offered by the Americans.⁴¹ In a seminar organised by the Strategic Vision Institute (SVI) in Islamabad on November 9, 2015, it was made quite clear to the national policymakers that they should only consider the idea of becoming a 'normal' nuclear state on terms offered to other non-NPT states such as India.⁴² Naturally, public opinion in Pakistan shaped by opinion-makers did not favour the 'normal' nuclear Pakistan proposal, as it was considered another attempt to browbeat Pakistan into accepting terms that could compromise its national security.

What Lies Ahead?

For many in Pakistan, the 'normal nuclear Pakistan' proposal by the US think-tank community lacks meaningful incentives and thus does not merit serious attention. Pakistan's stance has always been that it should be treated on par with India in such matters i.e. getting a civil nuclear deal and admission into the NSG on a criteria-based approach. On a serious note, if these are Pakistan's goals, what is it willing to accept in the bargain? Can it for instance give up on its TNWs, downgrade its policy of full spectrum deterrence to merely strategic deterrence and not oppose the FMCT proposal at the CD without attaching the demand to account for existing fissile material stocks and is it even within its control to not 'allow' any terrorist activity to emanate from its soil?

Playing the devil's advocate let us examine the merits of accepting some of these conditions. First of all, there is the minor issue of shifting the nuclear policy from 'full spectrum' to 'strategic' deterrence. This is only a matter of semantics; and such a 'strident' approach can actually be

⁴¹ Sobia Paracha, "(Ab)normal Nuclear Pakistan," *Diplomat*, April 27, 2016, <http://thediplomat.com/2016/04/abnormal-nuclear-pakistan/>.

⁴² "Pakistan be Included in N-Mainstream on same Terms as other Non-NPT States: Think Tank," *Dawn*, November 10, 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1218693>.

subsumed within the concept of credible minimum deterrence.⁴³ The main stumbling blocks are TNWs and FMCT.

Let us consider the case of TNWs. At the moment, *Nasr* represents a potent battlefield missile system, with credible deterrent value to halt any Indian offensive formation in its tracks.⁴⁴ Unless the ground situation changes and Indian strategy shifts to launching an offensive from the sea or letting its Air Force lead with its standoff weapons, there is little likelihood of Pakistan not relying on short-range nuclear weapons like *Nasr* to halt a ground offensive. It is interesting to note that Pakistan does not want to flaunt its TNW capability and did not showcase the *Nasr* missile in the annual military parade held on March 23, 2016 in Islamabad.⁴⁵

A practical step to keep tensions under control could be not to deploy TNWs without credible information about the CSD being animated in order to prevent an inadvertent exchange of short-range nuclear weapons. This would be in line with the Dalton-Krepon suggestion calling for a recessed deterrent posture and refraining from deploying TNWs at the forward edge of the battle.⁴⁶ Redlines for TNW deployment should be clearly communicated to the other party. The movement of Indian Integrated Brigade Groups (IBGs) out of their launch pads for an offensive against Pakistan would require intrusive surveillance and monitoring as well as robust confidence building measures (CBMs). Upgrading existing national technical means would necessitate international collaboration and sharing of intelligence with countries having surveillance satellites in orbit. In case India resorts to rapid shallow manoeuvres, Pakistan should have all the means available to

⁴³ Based on the remarks by a retired diplomat during a roundtable after the keynote address by Lieutenant General Khalid A. Kidwai, former DG SPD and Advisor Development National Command Authority (NCA) held at the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad on Pakistan's role in NSS, March 25, 2016. Press report covering the event appeared as "ISSI Organises Roundtable Discussion on Pakistan's Role in NSS," *Associated Press of Pakistan*, March 25, 2016.

⁴⁴ Christopher Clary, Gaurav Kampani and Jaganath Sankaran, "Battling over Pakistan's Battlefield Nuclear Weapons," *International Security* 40, no. 4 (2016): 166-170.

⁴⁵ Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Commitment not to Indulge in Arms Race Reaffirmed," *Dawn*, March 24, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1247590/commitment-not-to-indulge-in-arms-race-reaffirmed>; Ayaz Gul, "Chinese Troops Participate in Pakistan's Republic Day Parade," *Voice of America*, March 23, 2017, <http://www.voanews.com/a/chinese-troops-pakistan-republic-day-parade/3778581.html>. The same was, however, showcased at the same event in 2017.

⁴⁶ Dalton and Krepon, *A Normal Nuclear Pakistan*.

quickly deploy *Nasr* missiles. Obviously, the danger here is that the early warning may be too short for any meaningful response that could be further delayed through kinetic, electronic and sub-conventional means. Therefore, whenever, the composite dialogue process between India and Pakistan is resumed TNW CBMs should be on the agenda. This should include Pakistan's *Nasr* (60-90 km) and India's *Pragati* (70-150 km) and *Prahaar* (150 km). In fact, for the sake of lasting peace and stability in the region, national leaders of both countries should actually discuss tangible bilateral arms control agreements modeled on such Cold War models such as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.⁴⁷

The issue of FMCT is technical in nature and needs serious consideration. Before any country can put a cap on its fissile material production it should be sure that the amounts it has already produced would suffice in times to come. Every country has its own standards for maintaining sufficient fissile material stockpiles. Both India and Pakistan have roughly 100 nuclear warheads apiece according to various information sources. India at the moment has enough fissile material to produce from 356 to 492 nuclear warheads.⁴⁸ This clearly indicates a dangerous new trend that India has a growing stockpile of fissile material to add to its existing arsenal of nuclear weapons. In fact, the Dalton-Krepon report has suggested the need to 'constrain India's "breakout" capability inherent in its unsafeguarded power reactors and the prototype fast breeder reactor.'⁴⁹ Practically speaking, there will be no stop to production of fissile material in either India or Pakistan without a treaty that accounts for all existing stocks instead of focusing only on future production. Within the prevailing asymmetries in stocks, development in force postures and a constant environment of mistrust there can be no end to the fissile material race. Pakistan is currently holding out in the CD using its consensus vote. It is sticking to its demand that existing fissile material stocks should be included in a treaty on fissile material. Those who want the FMCT in its present shape have on occasions threatened to

⁴⁷ Daryl Kimball and Kingston Reiff, "The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty at a Glance" (brief, Arms Control Association, Washington, D.C., 2017), <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/INFtreaty>.

⁴⁸ Syed Muhammad Ali, "Indian Unsafeguarded Nuclear Reactor Programme: The Role of Individuals, Politics and Technology," in Adeela Azam, Ahmed Khan, Sameer Ali Khan and Syed Muhammad Ali, *Indian Unsafeguarded Nuclear Programme* (Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, 2016), 108-109.

⁴⁹ Dalton and Krepon, *A Normal Nuclear Pakistan*, 33.

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move the issue out of the CD and placing it before the UN.⁵⁰ Creating such a precedent would encourage China and Russia to move other longstanding issues – such as Prevention of an Armed Race in Outer Space (PAROS) – outside the CD. Such an eventuality, nonetheless, needs to be seriously thought over to determine the amount of fissile material required. Some of it can be used for fabrication of at least 10-20 nuclear warheads over the next five to ten years and the remaining amount can be kept as strategic reserve.

Certain commitments can be made fairly easily on the condition that India should do the same e.g. the agreement to a recessed deterrence posture and limiting the production of short-range delivery vehicles and TNWs. India needs to abide by its pledge to separate civilian and military nuclear facilities. In contrast all civilian nuclear power plants of Pakistan and two research reactors are under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. The civilian reactors include the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP), Chashma Nuclear Power Plants (CHASHNUP) I, II, III and IV.⁵¹ The two new coastal plants KANNUP II and III will also be under IAEA safeguards.⁵²

The last two points are about signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and terrorism. Pakistan's principled stand has always been that that this is contingent on India's pledge. In the last conference on CTBT held in Vienna, Pakistan reiterated that:

Despite being a non-signatory to the treaty, it supported the objective and purpose of the meeting by maintaining a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing.⁵³

The Dalton-Krepon proposal has suggested that if Pakistan signs the CTBT *before* India, it incurs little risk if it held off ratification and

⁵⁰ Nina Srinivasan Rathbun, "Glass Half Full? Evaluating the Impact of New US Policy on the Legitimacy of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime," in *State Behaviour and the Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime*, ed. Jeffery R. Fields (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2014), 66.

⁵¹ WNC, "Nuclear Power in Pakistan" (London: World Nuclear Association, April 2017), <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-o-s/pakistan.aspx>.

⁵² K. Iqbal, "Inevitability of Nuclear Electricity Generation," *Nation*, March 23, 2015, <http://nation.com.pk/columns/23-Mar-2015/inevitability-of-nuclear-electricity-generation>.

⁵³ "Pakistan Reaffirms Commitment to N-Test Moratorium," *Dawn*, June 15, 2016, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1264952>.

declared its right to resume testing should India do so.⁵⁴ This could be similar to what US has done so far i.e. signed the CTBT but not ratified it.

The caveat regarding terrorist activity is superfluous. No sovereign nation will allow the use of its territory for terrorism. Accepting that no such activity would happen in future will be tantamount to *mea culpa*. It would be a self-inflicted wound and unnecessary acceptance of an activity that Pakistan says it does not support. The inherent domestic negative fallout notwithstanding, Pakistan has tried to address the Dalton-Krepon suggestion that it should take actions against groups ostensibly operating from its territory to send positive signals and reduce the risks of inter-state crises, confrontation, and subsequent nuclear dangers by putting Hafiz Saeed⁵⁵ under house arrest.⁵⁶ Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also renewed his offer of friendship to India in his recent trip to Turkey.⁵⁷ It is for India to accept or reject the olive branch.

Conclusion

Under the current turbulent regional and international milieu, Pakistan should carefully weigh its options to become an internationally acceptable 'normal' nuclear state without compromising its genuine security concerns. Historically, different approaches have been adopted to normalise the environment in South Asia. In the pre-nuclear era, peace proposals were bounced back and forth between the subcontinent's leaders. Prime Minister of India Pundit Nehru proposed a no-war pact in 1948 and President Ayub Khan of Pakistan called for joint defence provided the Kashmir issue was resolved, but both proposals went nowhere.⁵⁸ In 1972, many years before the two countries attained nuclear status, Pakistan proposed a South Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ)⁵⁹. None of the major powers at that time pressured India into accepting a mutually beneficial deal that would have kept South Asia free

⁵⁴ Dalton and Krepon, *A Normal Nuclear Pakistan*, 34-35.

⁵⁵ Co-founder of Lashkar-e-Taiba and the chief or *amir* of Jama'at-ud-Da'wah.

⁵⁶ "House Arrest of JuD Chief Hafiz Saeed a Policy Decision: DG ISPR," *Dawn*, February 1, 2017, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1311868>.

⁵⁷ "An Opportunity for Pak-India Ties," editorial, *Dawn*, March 13, 2017, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1320109/an-opportunity-for-pak-india-ties>.

⁵⁸ Stephen Phillip Cohen, "India, Pakistan and Kashmir," in *India as an Emerging Power*, ed. Sumit Ganguly (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 40.

⁵⁹ Samina Ahmed, "Pakistan's Proposal for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in South Asia," *Pakistan Horizon* 32, no. 4 (1979): 92-130.

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of nuclear weapons.⁶⁰ By the time the two countries went nuclear in 1998, it was too late. Soon after the nuclear explosions, the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Lahore in February 1999, as a gesture of peace and conciliation was a positive step in normalising relations. The Lahore Declaration had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on nuclear and security issues. This provided a framework for security concepts, doctrines, arms control issues and CBMs.⁶¹

Unfortunately, the Pakistan-India relationship was upset by the clash in Kargil in May of the same year. It was alleged by the US that nuclear preparations had been made by Pakistan during this high altitude skirmish. Pakistan rejected these insinuations.⁶² During his tenure, President Musharraf tried to mitigate the harm done by Kargil and sought to revive the moribund relations. He suggested a four-point formula to settle the Kashmir issue, which according to his Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri very nearly succeeded.⁶³ In his address at the UN Summit in September 2015, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif offered a similar peace menu to stabilise relations between the two countries.⁶⁴ However, at the moment any rapprochement between India and Pakistan looks extremely bleak. The Indian Prime Minister and the hawks in his cabinet are on a diplomatic offensive to blame Pakistan for terrorism happening on its territory and to isolate it internationally.

Specifically on the nuclear safety and security issues, Pakistan has invested a lot of time, money and effort in making sure that its nuclear materials are secure. These efforts have won high praise from the IAEA.⁶⁵ The nuclear security summits organised by the Obama administration provided Pakistan an opportunity to prove its credentials as a responsible nuclear state. In a press conference on the eve of the 2016

⁶⁰ Kamal Matinuddin, *The Nuclearisation of South Asia* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 202.

⁶¹ Feroz Hasan Khan, *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 304-305.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 313-315.

⁶³ For details about the Musharraf proposal, Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri, *Neither a Hawk Nor a Dove: An Insider's Account of Pakistan's Foreign Relations* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015), 323-353.

⁶⁴ Ed Adamczyk, "Pakistan's Sharif to Offer India Peace Proposal at UN General Assembly," *United Press International*, September 24, 2015, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2015/09/24/Pakistans-Sharif-to-offer-India-peace-proposal-at-UN-General-Assembly/1441443115308/.

⁶⁵ Irfan Haider, "IAEA Praises Pakistan's Nuclear Security Record," *Dawn*, September 27, 2015, <http://www.dawn.com/news/1209311>.

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summit, the US Under Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller for Arms Control and International Security stressed that her country had ‘a very solid cooperation with Pakistan on nuclear security.’ She praised the mature capability of Pakistan’s Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence at Chakri. She alluded to the cooperation of the US and Pakistan on nuclear security but did express her concerns about the deployment of battlefield nuclear weapons by Pakistan.⁶⁶ So at the moment, Pakistan’s nuclear safety and security track record is appreciated by the US, but with ifs and buts.

Returning to the original discussion of the political costs of becoming a normal nuclear state as recommended by Dalton-Krepon, there is need of a serious internal debate shorn of hype and emotion. If Pakistan wants to become a recognised nuclear state, while remaining outside the NPT, it really needs to prepare a roadmap. In step one, the nation’s non-negotiable security requirements should be determined. In step two, the terms that are negotiable should be identified. In step three, a dialogue process should be started with the purveyors of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime for acceptance as a normal nuclear state. It should be kept in mind that India has a clear-cut plan to become a normal nuclear state and is following it with determination and focus. ■

⁶⁶ “Preview of the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit,” *US State Department*, March 29, 2016, <https://2009-2017-fpc.state.gov/255301.htm>.