India And Pakistan Relationship Essay, Research Paper

INDIA AND PAKISTAN: THE NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION INTRODUCTION The testing of nuclear devices, conducted by India and Pakistan in May of this year, and the obvious and subsequent nuclear deliverance capabilities that these nations clearly now possess, have only heightened tensions within South Asia and the international community. But the retaliatory stratagems that the Indians and Pakistanis have been engaging in for the past fifty years and most importantly the recent nuclear tests, can only be attributed to the convergent and divergent National Interests of these nation states, ultimately bringing South Asia to the brink of a nuclear arms race.Although the nuclear issue is integral in the geo-strategic struggle, the princely state of Kashmir has intensified the crisis since the insurgence of Muslims in 1947. This accession by coreligionists in Pakistan created border fighting throughout 1948 and 1949. Although India and Pakistan agreed, in July 1949, on a line demarcating their respective zones of occupation in Kashmir, the two nations were unable to reconcile basic differences on the terms of the proposed plebiscite. The deadlock was primarily due to Indian insistence that Pakistani troops be withdrawn from the disputed territory before the plebiscite and to Pakistan’s refusal to withdraw its troops unless the Indians also withdrew theirs. INDIA The historical deposition of India’s interests on nuclear proliferation has, in essence, been due to the perception that it could not be a world power unless it was a nuclear capable state. Being locked out of the nuclear club by signing the CTBT would, in India’s view, have locked it into second-grade status. India opposes the imposition and arrogance of the five nuclear powers, which have their own nuclear status permanently, enshrined in the CTBT and the NPT . This is ultimately giving the five nuclear powers a permanent advantage over New Dehli. The nuclear tests conducted are an assertion of India’s objections and opposition to current world management. India is divided in their exigency for international recognition. On one level their nuclear weapons are used as a symbol of international power and prestige, but their introspective viewpoint on Kashmir has required no international intervention. In light of their nuclear proclivities, the BJP have not pronounced their stance and interest on Kashmir, but rather denounced the ‘illegitimate’ interests of Pakistan within the region. India has already indicated that it doesn’t want any other nation state to get involved in the Kashmir issue. Although, increasingly wary, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee is adamant that his nuclear arms would “never be weapons of aggression” . This would only be said to soften the impact of sanctions and stabilise a fragile economy. But the BJP would also be looking to reinforce a stable and competent C I as tensions with Pakistan and China increase. There will always be the question of how advanced the command and control systems that must accompany an effective nuclear deterrent are . “We have a big bomb now for which necessary command and control system is also in place.” Domestically, the nuclear tests are a perfect issue to unite its disparate allies in parliament and deflect attention from its internal problems . This is a great relief to the BJP, forced before the election to drop contentious pro-Hindu policies from its political agenda. But still the BJP are taking a calculated risk that there is enough domestic support for it to comfortably incur international criticism and sanctions. It is unlikely that both factors will remain to dramatically alter national interests, though. Alternatively, for all the enduring tension between India and Pakistan, the real target of India’s nuclear angst maybe more discrete, in which, may pose more of a threat to its National Security than Pakistan ever will. Some senior Indian leaders, including Defence Minister George Fernandes, have even identified China as the number one strategic threat to India. Up until two years ago when it signed onto the CTBT, China was running the most ‘vigorous and extensive nuclear weapons development program of any nation state in the world’ . Like France, China undertook a full range of tests such that it did not need any more to develop a full nuclear arsenal and could then sign the CTBT without hampering its capability. PAKISTAN Pakistan’s interests are laced with diplomacy and military instability. Pakistan claimed to be acting in self-defence when it detonated five underground nuclear devices. The international community, which failed to persuade Pakistan to show restraint, has reproved the Pakistani government by imposing sanctions, just as it did with India. Pakistani leaders believe the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction is not only a means of achieving policy goals but also an act of defiance of the rest of the world – especially the nuclear powers.Pakistan’s move from being a nuclear threshold state in the 1970’s to a nuclear capable state in late May has not just increased tensions with India but with other regional neighbours. The tests conducted by Pakistan could cause bordering nations, especially Iran, to create a nuclear armament in order to neutralise any push by Pakistan for regional supremacy, especially in the context of Pakistan’s support of the anti-Iranian, ultra-orthodox Islamic Taliban militia in neighbouring Afghanistan. These tests have exhorted other regional antagonists to become aware of the capabilities of Pakistan, causing an Asian nuclear arms race.The tests have come as a price, though. Pakistan has also been systematically pressured into testing through its enduring domestic issues . Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, is conscious that is position is politically unstable and is wary that his people want Pakistan to establish nuclear parity in the region. ‘He (Sharif) has 85%, like India, that will want a nuclear detonation and if he doesn’t he’ll lose the election.’ Pakistan’s command and control system would have a severe disadvantage if it did not carry out the tests, especially. Pakistan has been hit with sanctions and embargoes that will ultimately devastate the economy. The point to remember about Pakistan is that its economy is on the verge of bankruptcy and its society is in the grip of deep social divisions, expanding sectarian violence, widespread corruption (permeating most governmental and non-governmental organisations) and notable human rights violations, as well as extensive lack of law and order and political stability. But this is no radical change; these political dilemmas have been evident in the government for the past three decades. With public opinion firmly behind Pakistan and a sense of bravado within government circles that the nation can survive economic sanctions, Islamabad has little choice but to order testing sooner rather than later.

“We’ll be prepared for (sanctions). The people of Pakistan are strong, they have their pride and they will be able to stand up to it.’ INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS The detonation of nuclear devices has, in essence, forced the rethinking in Western Capitals of ideas that had come to be policy truisms. For one thing, the widely acknowledged ascendancy of United States commercial and economic interests over strategic and other goals, should be questioned much more sharply. The motive of the US that, ‘trade helps sell democratic views’ has jeopardised tensions between India and Pakistan long before the nuclear tests. However, Washington does not need to demonstrate its leadership by ‘reducing America’s nuclear stockpile’. The US has not been willing to support its rhetoric with actions, because nuclear weapons development within such an unstable region, as South Asia, makes for a deeply hostile region.The US, over previous years, has sustained a close and cooperative relationship with Pakistan due to historical and commercial interests. During the last decade, the two nations worked very closely for bringing about conditions, which led to the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan , thus trouncing the subjective push of Soviet idealism within the region. The United States has also been pleased with Pakistan’s sense of appreciation to western culture and the economic and commercial benefits it brings. New Dehli, however, has openly rejected western media and economics within its state, instilling a sense of nationalistic pride within its people with no plights from external interests. This has angered Washington, believing that this stubborn hindrance is slowing relationships between the two nations.Despite these relationships, the US has responded to the tests similarly between the two offending nations, revoking trade visits and imposing sanctions. Japan, and its sense of moral indignation, has also strongly opposed the nuclear tests. But Tokyo has also offered to mediate between the two nations on the nuclear tests and on the dispute over Kashmir. The move reflects Japan’s desire for a high-profileer role in international negotiations – the nuclear issue is one, after all, on which Japan has direct experience. Having forced itself into the centre of the issue, Japan may now need to look for a new way of taking a significant part in the preventing the escalation of nuclear arms in Asia. China’s involvement in the nuclear tests has most probably been more than symbolic. The Chinese have been rumoured to provide a limited amount of nuclear technology to Pakistan, to indirectly stem the accession of Indian interests within the region. Beijing has provided designs and materials, but did not exceed the extensive civilian nuclear exchange programme that these two nations have. China is unlikely to retaliate with similar nuclear tests, though, because there isn’t sufficient pressure. The Chinese government made sufficient tests before it joined the CTBT clearly showing that their nuclear programme is adequate, with no real technological or practical needs to test. There will also be no symbolic reason to conduct such tests that would aggravate the arms race in South Asia. In all, the reaction of the international community towards these tests has been similar, with the imposition of sanctions sufficiently punishing both nation states. ATTEMPTS AT RESOLUTION The impression the insecurity of the region is having is that religious-fundamentalism and religious-based nationalism are the most disruptive forces facing Western policy makers. This is because the religious animosity between India and Pakistan is more intense than the ideological rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War Era. To reconcile basic differences these nations will need to overcome religious differences that are so complex and convoluted.In Geneva foreign ministries of the United States, China, Russia, Britain and France ‘expressed their deep concern about the danger to peace and stability in the region’ and met to determine ‘to arrest the nuclear arms race in South Asia, and for India and Pakistan to engage in direct talks’. To curb the ascendancy of nuclear arms in South Asia these nations were asked to pledge not to export nuclear weapons or equipment to India or Pakistan, and to help reconcile their differences in their long-standing dispute over Kashmir. The international media is expecting too much in the way of intervention of major powers to avert a crisis, though. The key lies with India and Pakistan working out the differences with substantial dialogue. This could be initiated if a number of factors are resolved first. The necessity is persuade India and Pakistan to be involved in global arms control; including signing the CTBT unconditionally. But, these solutions are only being obstructed by the intransigence of both nation states, which persistently mar the attempt at diplomacy through their arrogance towards one another. The international community is producing adequate resolution formats, which will ultimately be successful, if both nation states cooperate with each other.The short-term resolution that may keep both Pakistan and India at bay is the ideology behind MAD . Nuclear weapons could act as an antidote to other nation states nuclear capabilities, so the question of moral justification for both countries’ to establish a nuclear armament needs to be asked. Nuclear parity may control the seriousness of warfare between India and Pakistan but this is a very unstable arrangement. Both governments have demonstrated their willingness to use any means necessary to assert and defend its national interests. So, in essence, ‘if push comes to shove’ disastrous consequences may take place. Despite these attempts, resolutions are difficult to attain in this crisis due to the complexity of the historical hostilities of the nation states, divided by religious differences and a common greed for Kashmir. 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